The
WOTRO Approach

A pilot study of eight cases - exploring project outcomes and WOTRO’s contribution

Dr Ellen Lammers
Daniëlle de Winter, DBMresearch
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(adjusted and made anonymous for the purpose of publishing online)
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Executive summary

This report shares the results of a pilot study commissioned by WOTRO to review and assess its approach as developed and implemented over the last five to ten years.

During the first phase of the pilot study, a methodology was developed to review WOTRO’s approach and its outcomes in terms of (potential towards) development impact. WOTRO’s Theory of Change is used as starting point and reference throughout these stages of analysis.

During the second phase of the pilot study, the three-stage methodology was applied for the review of eight cases, i.e. WOTRO-funded research projects. The case studies provide an analysis both on project outcomes and on WOTRO’s contribution to these outcomes. The three stages entailed: case selection, outcome harvesting, and contribution analysis.

Case selection

The cases represent three of the four research programmes that have been implemented under the Dutch Knowledge Platform structure (i.e. Food & Business Research, RIDDSA and Security & Rule of Law), as well as two earlier programmes (CoCooN and GPHSR).

Outcome harvesting

The outcome harvesting method helped to retrieve significant achievements in terms of academic as well as policy and practice-oriented potential for impact. In certain contexts, research recommendations were put on local or national agendas, in other cases the research findings led to improved practices or business strategies by practitioners (NGO, public or private), or were taken up in the theories of change of different actors (NGO or governmental).

It is strongly recommended that WOTRO integrates the outcome harvesting method and the tools developed into a continuous and programme-wide M&E process, while adding a field-based review component for improved insight into research uptake by a wide range of stakeholders in low and middle-income countries.

Contribution analysis

The contribution analysis includes two approaches that WOTRO uses to encourage and promote outcomes and impact:

- setting criteria for successful projects in the calls for Proposals (coined ‘enabling criteria’)
  - scientific rigor
  - interdisciplinarity
  - co-creation
  - adaptive, reflexive, research approach and;
- offering interventions throughout the course of the project (coined ‘intervention criteria’)
  - relevance of research questions for potential users
  - synthesised and repackaged research progress and results for different audiences
  - increased interest among policy and practice
  - scientific communities for research for development

The findings of the contribution analysis are presented following six key assumptions of WOTRO’s Theory of Change. The assumptions represent: research partnership, engagement with policy and practice, alignment with agendas, high-quality interdisciplinary knowledge, new insights in complex development issues, and use of research-based knowledge. For each of these assumptions, a summary of key findings, challenges and recommendations is provided (in Annex 7).

Insights

An important finding is that the multi-stakeholder, transdisciplinary research setup - that has become WOTRO’s hallmark approach - is highly appreciated because of its contribution to the relevance of research for both policy and practice as well as the increased chances for research uptake and use. This finding is confirmed by stakeholders who were targeted by the projects as potential users of
research outcomes and who responded to this study’s survey. It is noted that, like the research consortia members themselves, these ‘outer circle’ stakeholders stress the importance of face-to-face contact and exchange for increasing the chances of research uptake.

The multi-stakeholder approach is, however, also challenging in terms of both project management and the trade-offs that are sometimes experienced regarding project focus and research rigour. Moreover, the academic researchers involved remain sceptical about the demands made on them for sharing preliminary results, while they regret the limited opportunities for sharing outcomes and encouraging research uptake after the official project closure. Other challenges include the tension (in certain cases) between Dutch policy priorities and Southern demands for both policy and practice relevance; as well as an active engagement between the research consortia and Dutch policymakers.

**Recommendations**

The overall recommendation is that WOTRO sticks with and further capitalises on its strength, which is: to fund and manage research projects of high scientific quality that carry a strong potential to generate development outcomes and impact. Besides, a few more specific recommendations followed from the pilot study to strengthen the implementation of WOTRO’s approach regarding the following three aspects:

- programme design and tendering procedure;
- programme management and interventions, and;
- monitoring & evaluation.

An overview of the recommendations can be found in chapter 4 and Annex 8.

**Programme design and tendering procedure**

Considered of importance are: determination of the theme, enabling criteria, selection procedure, and templates & guidelines. The following suggestions were formulated:

- Develop a very clearly formulated Theory of Change that is known, shared and used throughout the organisation as guiding tool for the design, implementation and monitoring of research programmes.
- Ensure that the project requirements (e.g. for stakeholder engagement and knowledge sharing) and the associated budgets and competences (both on project, programme and support-level) are aligned and sufficient.
- Fund fewer projects with a longer time-span (rather than a larger number of short-term projects), focuses on strengthening coherence between projects, and ensures the harvesting of intermediate results to be able to respond to demands from both policy and practice stakeholders.

**Programme management and interventions**

Considered of importance are: levelling & timing of interventions, role division with Knowledge Platforms, appoint a specific ‘Research for Development’ coordinator. The following suggestions were formulated:

- Capitalise more on the mandatory use of the Impact Pathway (IP). This tool helped consortia to think strategically about enhancing the relevance of research findings, while also supporting both the internal management of as well as the external communication by the multi-stakeholder projects. WOTRO can make more systematic use of the Impact Pathway tool to monitor progress and provide targeted support throughout the project period.
- Strengthen synergy at the research programme level, both during the project selection and implementation phases, in order to reinforce the policy relevance of individual projects and the programmes as a whole.
- Encourage research projects to not only work towards addressing their own research questions, but also make clear how their outcomes are relevant to programme/Call level goals. This can be stimulated by organising programme-level interventions such as country or regional meetings and annual meetings.

**Monitoring & evaluation (M&E)**
Considered of importance are: focus on intermediate results, coherence in programmes, and considering project achievements. The following suggestions were formulated:

- A continuous M&E process must be put in place not only to monitor progress but also to offer structural support to funded projects to increase their chances for research relevance, uptake and use. This requires sufficient FTE and expertise within WOTRO.
- By means of a robust monitoring and evaluation structure, consortia sharing intermediate results should be ensured.
1. Purpose and approach of pilot study

Over the past decade, WOTRO has developed its approach towards promoting research for development. Research projects have been individually assessed, programmes have been evaluated, but so far the overall contribution – the outcomes and added value - of WOTRO’s dedicated approach has not been systematically measured.

Three-phase methodology

The first phase of this study therefore focused on developing a methodology that could help in assessing the outcomes of WOTRO-funded research towards achieving objectives and impact, as well as WOTRO’s contribution to these outcomes. A summary of the different phases and components of this methodology is presented in Figure 1. The second phase consisted of a pilot study of eight case studies, that served the purpose of testing this methodology and the two levels of analysis it facilitates.

Phase 1: Case selection

Cases selected based on their administrative and phase characteristics, as well as their intentional characteristics. The former allows for determining a short-list for a robust distribution of cases, the latter allows us to distinguish projects based on their commitment to WOTRO’s approach as specified in the calls.

Activities:
- Diverse case selection: administrative and phase characteristics
- Influential case selection: intentional characteristics

Approach:
- Type of indicators: Enabling contribution indicators
- Type of methods: document analysis, semi-structured interviews

Phase 2: Outcome harvesting

Outcome harvesting at project level creates the possibility of determining whether and how an intervention has contributed to realizing the outcomes. The outcome harvesting stage will be conducted in four steps, with the help of the research uptake indicators.

Activities:
- Document analysis (existing evidence and data)
- Verification with project owners through email/phone
- Project-specific survey among stakeholders
- Outcome harvesting interviews

Approach:
- Type of indicators: Research uptake indicators
- Type of methods: document analysis, (semi-)structured interviews, surveys

Phase 3: Contribution analysis

This third stage of the methodological approach aims to establish WOTRO’s contributions to research uptake outcomes at project level, and Research for Development outcomes reflected in WOTRO’s organisational Theory of Change.

Activities:
- Outcome harvesting interviews
- Focus Group Discussions MFA
- Overall results analysis on WOTRO’s contribution in relation to its Theory of Change

Approach:
- Type of indicators: Enabling and intervention contribution indicators
- Type of methods: document analysis, (semi-)structured interviews

Figure 1: Quick Glance of three-phase methodology

This twofold approach allowed us to develop an argumentation for what outcomes and what processes contributed to, or instead obstructed, achieving research uptake, providing a ‘lessons learned’-framework for future activities and approaches of WOTRO.
Analytical approach: WOTRO’s Theory of Change as guide

The Theory of Change (see Figure 2 and Annex 1) is used as a guide to assess the outcomes and contribution of WOTRO’s Research for Development approach. For the analysis of the eight selected case studies of this pilot, six different outcomes identified in the Theory of Change are mapped and reflected on.

For each case study, these intermediate outcomes are discussed as WOTRO assumes that positive outcomes on these three levels will eventually lead to a contribution to the long-term outcomes and the overall goal of ‘global, sustainable and inclusive change’. Because this pilot study reviews eight individual projects, six of which concern projects that have only very recently been finalised or are still being finalised, it is beyond the scope of this study to draw solid conclusions on the highest-level outcomes 1 to 3.

![Figure 2: NWO-WOTRO’s Theory of Change (see also Annex 1)](image-url)
2. Case studies

A total of eight case studies were selected for this pilot study on the basis of a larger sample of recommended cases by NWO-WOTRO coordinators. From this larger sample, a short-list of cases was selected based on their administrative characteristics (sector, duration and budget) and phase characteristics (final stages of project implementation). The final selection was made by scoring the projects based on the enabling criteria as presented in the methodological framework, allowing us to distinguish projects based on their commitments to WOTRO’s approach as specified in the calls for proposals. The list of case studies is as follows:

- **Food & Business**
  - Improving sustainability in Indonesia’s tuna supply chain
  - Improving food cereals with milk protein in Uganda

- **RIDSSA**
  - Social protection in Ghana and Kenya
  - Contribution of inclusive business strategies to inclusive development in SSA

- **SRoL**
  - Conflict sensitive employment in Afghanistan
  - Improving economic opportunity interventions for young people in fragile settings

- **CoCooN**
  - Nationalization of extractive industries, conflict and co-operation

- **GHPHSR**
  - Improving the use of laboratory services for antenatal care in Senegal

Projects that were selected are associated with three of the four Knowledge Platforms. Projects from the fourth Knowledge Platform were not suitable for this study because they were still in the early stages of implementation. In addition, two cases were added from earlier WOTRO programmes (CoCooN and Global Health Policy and Health Systems Research (GHPHSR)). These were deemed interesting from a comparative perspective, because they had been finalised a few years prior to this pilot study – making their research uptake outcomes potentially higher.

For each case, a fact sheet is provided that summarises the objective of the research, and a summary of key outcomes following from the research. These fact sheets can be found in Annex 5.
3. Analysis of outcomes & WOTRO’s contribution

The Theory of Change is used as a guide to assess the outcomes and contribution of WOTRO’s approach. For the analysis of the outcomes of the eight cases reviewed in this pilot study, and WOTRO’s contribution to these outcomes, the following six key assumptions of the Theory of Change\(^1\) are considered:

1. research partnership;
2. engagement with policy and practice;
3. alignment with agendas;
4. high-quality interdisciplinary knowledge;
5. new insights in complex development issues, and;
6. use of research-based knowledge.

For each case study, these intermediate outcomes are presented as WOTRO assumes that positive outcomes on these three levels will eventually lead to a contribution to the long-term outcomes and the overall goal of ‘global, sustainable and inclusive change’.

The achievements (outcomes and process) for each of the six Theory of Change assumptions is explicated according to the following set-up\(^2\).

- explicate the assumption that is put forward in the Theory of Change, shown in a red box.
- address what conditions WOTRO has set, and which interventions it offered, to support results towards the associated outcomes.
- present the overall outcomes at project level of the six cases selected for this pilot, complemented by results from the survey that was conducted among external stakeholders of four of these six projects.
- summarise the findings, challenges and recommendations for ways in which WOTRO could strengthen its contribution to the outcomes achieved by research projects.

In the following paragraphs, the findings, insights and recommendations are shown, as well as a short description on the assumption. The result of the full set-up can be found in Annex 6.

**Research Partnerships**

*If sustained North-South and multi-stakeholder research partnerships are in place (outcome 8), this is assumed to lead to more co-creation of high-quality interdisciplinary knowledge and insights for tackling complex development issues (outcomes 6 & 7).*

**Findings**

- Opportunities for face-to-face engagement with all consortium partners during the proposal development and/or inception stage of the research is considered very helpful for ‘consensus-building’ around research questions and ‘fine-tuning’ of research and knowledge sharing approaches.
- The mandatory use of an Impact Pathway helped consortia to think strategically about enhancing the relevance of research findings; it was also supported the management of the multi-stakeholder projects.

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\(^1\) Because this pilot study reviews eight individual projects, six of which concern projects that have only very recently been finalised or are still being finalised, it is beyond the scope of this study to draw solid conclusions on the highest-level outcomes 1 to 3.

\(^2\) Please note that this is not a rigorous study of the dozens of research projects that WOTRO has supported throughout the past decade, and findings should therefore be considered in that light. Having said that, this pilot study offered a unique opportunity to explore WOTRO’s approach, revealing both strengths and weaknesses in its building blocks. Insights from this pilot study provide opportunities for organisational learning to strengthen WOTRO’s approach and its contribution to the outcomes of future projects.
Private sector partners, especially, can bring alternative sources of evidence and types of knowledge to the table. Research conducted in multi-stakeholder partnership can benefit from the diversity of capacities that academic and practitioner (NGO, public, private) organisations bring along, both in terms of strengthening the research implementation and its outcomes and in reaching out to external audiences.

**Challenges**

- Working in multi-stakeholder research partnerships requires dedicated time and capacities, which in many cases was underestimated.
- Southern practitioner organisations require additional support when acting as the main applicant and lead of the consortium. The study showed that organisations may need extra support to perform their role comfortably and to make the most of this learning experience.

**Recommendations**

- To ensure joint ownership, demand-drivenness and enhanced relevance of the research project, the cases show that consortia can benefit from the opportunity to come together face-to-face at the very start of the project, before implementation. This is especially relevant for consortia that cover a wide geographic scope and different types of stakeholders, which do not necessarily have budgets and capacity available for joint proposal development.
- The transdisciplinary approach that has become WOTRO’s hallmark, contributes to its mission of promoting research for development. Working together with different knowledge actors in multi-stakeholder consortia, however, is experienced as both a rewarding and a challenging undertaking. It might be worthwhile to conduct a review focused on the downsides and obstacles experienced as well as the solutions and best practices that consortia have developed. This can be used as input for training/exchange sessions with new consortia at the start of their projects.
- The study shows that the Impact Pathway is a very helpful and valuable tool for research consortia – for planning their research and working towards impact as well as for purposes of internal and external communication about the project goals. However, to capitalise more fully on its potential, WOTRO should provide dedicated support to consortia – especially those for whom this is a new tool – at the start of the research projects. Using the Impact Pathway requires a certain mind-set that cannot be assumed a given among all consortia partners.

**Engagement with policy & practice**

*If structural engagement with policy and practice stakeholders is established (outcome 9) from the very start of the research project, this ensures better alignment to national (and international) agendas and agenda setting (outcome 5).*

**Findings**

- Consortia indicate that engaging the ‘outer circle’ of stakeholders provides very valuable input for the research both in terms of content (better alignment with policy agendas) and process (stakeholders can help facilitate the research through their networks).
- Alignment depends highly on when stakeholders are engaged – at which stage in the process – and how. Engagement events that allow for face-to-face contact and exchange of views are considered most useful by both the research consortia and the external stakeholders.

**Challenges**

- There appears to be a conflict between consortia’s ambition to engage stakeholders to increase alignment and relevance (all consortia emphasise the importance of this) and the realisation of this ambition. Stakeholder engagement is very time consuming. Some consortia felt it took away too much time from research.
- Some consortia indicated that the time requested from the Knowledge Platforms and WOTRO to share (intermediate) results and to engage with stakeholders on (preliminary) findings, conflicted with the time investment needed for conducting rigorous scientific research. Researchers feel uncomfortable when they are pushed to share findings too early on.
Alignment with the Dutch policy agenda does not automatically guarantee engagement by the ministry staff with the projects and their outcomes. Concerns were expressed related to the limitations set to the budget for travel costs, which influenced the level of engagement that some research consortia could achieve.

**Recommendations**

- It is very useful to have early on engagement with external stakeholders to enhance alignment with local and national priorities and development agendas. A kick-off workshop that engages the ‘outer circle’ is an opportunity to realise this.
- Knowing which stakeholders should be targeted and how is a challenge for many projects. Providing training on stakeholder analysis and mapping (AIIM) to research consortia is therefore recommended.
- It is recommended that WOTRO makes it very clear in the calls for Proposals what exactly is expected of the research consortia in terms of knowledge sharing and engagement activities and commitments. This requirement should be put on paper explicating what the roles and expectations are of both WOTRO and the KPs. At the same time, WOTRO and the KPs should review whether their expectations are feasible for different kinds of projects, and explore ways to improve their collaboration also for the benefit of streamlining (reporting) requests to the consortia.

**Alignment with agendas**

*If research questions are aligned with national and international agendas and agenda-setting (outcome 5) this makes research more relevant for (innovation in) development. The higher the relevance of the research, the higher the chances for research uptake (or use, outcome 4).*

**Findings**

- Project leaders almost unanimously agree that the stronger the alignment with agendas of the targeted stakeholders, the more relevance a project carries, and the higher the chances are for research uptake (or use of research findings).
- Local consortium partners (based in the research country) play an important role in ensuring alignment with local and national development agendas.
- 80% of ‘outer circle’ stakeholders surveyed, stated that the topic(s) addressed by the research consortia met their interests and answered important policy or practice issues that they face in their work.

**Challenges**

- The process how and by whom decisions are made about the thematic focus of the calls was outside of the scope of this pilot. This process, however, has a large influence on the possible level of alignment with actual stakeholder agendas on the ground.
- Striking the right balance between alignment with Dutch policy priorities and the priorities of Southern actors (policy and practice) can be a challenge. In two cases, it was suggested that the Dutch development policy priorities were privileged over the priorities of Southern agendas.

**Recommendation**

- Only a few structures are in place for WOTRO to ensure that alignment is substantiated during the research process. It is recommended that WOTRO makes better use of the mandatory IPs formulated by the consortia, as a tool to monitor progress throughout the project period, and to provide support to consortia to ensure they do not lose sight of their initial ambitions in terms of relevance and impact.

**High-quality interdisciplinary knowledge**

*If high-quality interdisciplinary knowledge for development is created (outcome 6) this contributes to stimulating cutting-edge academic debate which may lead to new paradigms and concepts benefiting development (outcome 3).*

**Findings**
The cases reviewed provide evidence for significant contributions to academic debates, however, most projects have only recently been completed or are still in the final stages. Many journal articles, which are important for stirring academic debate, still await publishing.

Consortia state that the input from non-academic partners strengthens the relevance of the scientific research, although there is also a trade-off because the multi-stakeholder collaboration almost inevitably takes away time from conducting rigorous scientific research and analysing findings.

**Challenges**

- The multi-stakeholder set-up of the consortia, can challenge the ambition to realise high-quality interdisciplinary knowledge. The internal dynamics of the consortium partnership influence the project as it requires consensus in determining the research question, the methodology and the preferred outputs.
- WOTRO’s focus on interdisciplinary and even transdisciplinary research almost inevitably means that more efforts need to be made by research consortia to get their findings published in top rated journals (which often still privilege monodisciplinary research).
- While academic partners appreciate the contributions by practitioner organisations in their consortia for strengthening the relevance of the scientific research, it limits space for theoretical research questions to be taken up by the projects.
- Short-term projects (up to 6 months) make an almost impossible demand on the time availability of WOTRO coordinators. More importantly it is questionable whether such projects fit within WOTRO’s mission to promote high-quality scientific knowledge, especially when standards for project eligibility are lowered from ‘excellent and very good’ to ‘good’.

**Recommendations**

- In order to gain a more detailed picture of different aspects of the scientific outcomes of projects funded by WOTRO (levels of interdisciplinarity, citation scores, etc.) it would be interesting to include a bibliometric study in future evaluations of WOTRO programmes.
- In order to ascertain the contributions made to new concepts and/or paradigm shifts, it may be necessary to review the scientific impact at programme or call level, in addition to looking at these outcomes at project level.
- As academic conferences are important venues for promoting research findings, WOTRO might consider committing more budget for travel costs for researchers to present at international conferences.
- WOTRO might also consider providing support for co-authoring of working papers and journal articles, when non-scientific partners are involved. Committing budget for write-shops might be an interesting option. This at the same time serves the purpose of capacity building among Southern partners, both junior academics/researchers and staff of practitioner organisations.
- WOTRO (where relevant in collaboration with the KPs) should explore alternatives for satisfying the demands from policy-makers and practitioners for quicker, intermediate results, for instance by adjusting M&E cycles. Shortened research project timeframes may not be the only or best solution.

**New insights**

*If new insights are gained in complex development issues that challenge or improve current development approaches (outcome 7), and these are aligned to (inter-) national agendas (outcome 5) and co-created by multi-stakeholder partnerships (outcome 8), this contributes to the use of such insights (outcome 4).*

**Findings**

- Because of the conditions set for alignment and multi-stakeholder partnership, projects are in a better position to work towards delivering insights that can be used by policy-makers and (public, NGO, private) practitioners.
Different types of insights can be distinguished: methodological insights, insights that inspire new practices or business strategies, insights that facilitate the marketing of new products, insights that may lead to agenda-setting for different policy decisions, insights that challenge assumptions of established development discourse, and insights that reveal the controversies and complexities of the local dynamics in developing countries.

The outcomes of the survey show that the projects performed very well in terms of generating relevant new insights for ‘outer circle’ stakeholders.

**Challenges**

- Policy and practice stakeholders would benefit from earlier reporting on preliminary insights. However, some project leaders suggested that they did not feel confident to report on such intermediate insights. This points at the tricky balance between scientific standards and research aimed at delivering results for policy and practice.

**Recommendations**

- WOTRO could use M&E structures to gain better insight into intermediate insights developed by the projects.
- Further recommendations relate to the use of new insights.

**Use**

If partnerships stimulate co-creation, and engagement with policy and practice is pursued, more alignment with agendas can be expected, high-quality interdisciplinary knowledge will be generated, as well as new insights in complex development issues. This combination of conditions will stimulate an enhanced use of high-quality research-based knowledge for development.

**Findings**

- Achieving tangible outcomes in terms of research uptake takes time and can often not be established until after a project has ended. This is especially the case in volatile country contexts.
- The eight projects have all achieved, sometimes significant, levels of research uptake and use across different types of stakeholders. In certain cases, research recommendations were put on local or national agendas, in other cases the research findings led to improved practices or business strategies by practitioners (NGO, public or private), or were taken up in the theories of change of different actors (NGO or governmental).
- Over 50 per cent of the survey respondents state that through engagement with the research project they were inspired to change their professional approach to the topic that was addressed. Of these respondents, more than 55% in turn indicates that they or their organisation used the information, insights and/or knowledge to change or improve certain practices.

**Challenges**

- Several project leaders pointed at a tension between the ambitions of their research projects in terms of ensuring outcomes are being used, and the reality of the project cycle. After the formal closure of the project, there is no time nor budget left to focus on the last important phase of engagement that is to increase the chances of uptake and use of ultimate findings.
- WOTRO has no structure in place after projects have been finalised to assess to what extent Impact Pathway goals have been sufficiently pursued and whether research findings have been taken up by (un)intended stakeholders.

**Recommendations**

- Using the impact pathway more in the final assessment of the project, will help WOTRO to get a more in-depth picture of the results at ‘use’ level of projects. In certain programmes, the ‘outcomes’ and ‘impacts’ were described as ‘horizon’ goals, rather than achievable ambitions; leaving limited room for WOTRO to possibly reprimand projects that have steered away too much from their initial and approved intentions for impact.
4. Reflections and suggestions

In the previous chapter, the recommendations for strengthening WOTRO’s contribution to the outcomes was presented, associated with six key assumptions of WOTRO’s Theory of Change. In this chapter, the overall approach as developed and adopted by WOTRO is reflected on, as well as some practical suggestions to strengthen this approach are given.

Programme design and tendering procedure

Determining the theme

WOTRO’s role in determining the thematic focus of the research programmes has been limited in the calls associated with the Knowledge Platforms. The thematic decisions were based on the strategic guidance provided by the Dutch government policies (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in some cases Ministry of Economic Affairs). The responsible ministry coordinators requested, for example, online consultations coordinated by the knowledge platforms (F&BKP) or organised their own consultative rounds with (Southern) experts from the field (RIDSSA). WOTRO’s responsibility, as fund manager, was to ensure that the appropriate framework was provided by designing the procedural aspects of high-quality tenders and to rigorously assess the eligibility of research proposals for funding.

The division of responsibilities means that the task of ensuring that themes are aligned with current national and international agendas was, for a large part, beyond the scope of WOTRO’s mandate. This inevitably also impacted the level of influence that WOTRO had on ensuring that the research projects are geared towards producing relevant new knowledge and insights that support or challenge development thinking, strategies and practices. Furthermore, in a few cases there seemed to be a tension between the ambition to ensure that the thematic focus of the research programmes was closely aligned with MFA policy priorities as well as with policy agendas and priorities in low and middle-income countries where the research was to take place.

The importance that was attributed to ensuring the relevance of research programmes for the Dutch development policy also influenced the setup of the programmes. WOTRO’s customary approach to research programming (i.e. usually four-year research projects) was tested by pleas for quicker (insight into) the results of research projects. In some programmes, this led to a restructuring of the conditions (long-term to short-term projects) and – for one programme - of the scientific quality standards requested from research proposals (excellent scoring to good scoring). The findings of this pilot study suggest that neither WOTRO coordinators, nor project leaders necessarily favoured the short-term over long-term research projects, especially because of concerns about the validity and quality of the research outcomes.

Enabling criteria

WOTRO influences the nature of research programmes by setting specific conditions, described in this pilot study as enabling criteria, in the calls for Proposals. The list of enabling criteria follows from an assessment of all calls under the knowledge platform programmes and discussions with WOTRO coordinators. The selected criteria tackle factors that are meant to positively influence the ‘scientific and/or research quality’ as well as ‘relevance for (innovation in) development’ of research projects. Throughout the pilot study, the relevance of these criteria was questioned, as well as their contribution to achieving research uptake outcomes. Table 2 shows the enabling criteria that proved valuable throughout the pilot study in analysing research project outcomes as well as determining the contribution of WOTRO in achieving such results. The criteria can be used as building blocks for the development of future call for Proposals and assessment criteria. See Annex 3 for a proposed scoring card.
Enabling contribution criteria | Indicators
---|---
Scientific & research quality | Scientific rigor | Appropriate and coherent mix of approaches and methods
| | | Potential to generate new, evidence-based knowledge and insights
| Interdisciplinarity | Appropriate mix of scientific disciplines
Relevance for (innovation in) development | Co-creation | Demand-driven approach: joint definition of problem statement and research question with consortium members & external stakeholders; relevance of the research questions and potential outcomes for intended stakeholders
| | Collaborative, multi-stakeholder implementation of research activities
| | Composition of partnership (balanced geographical representation of consortium members; diversity in types of consortium members)
| Adaptive, reflexive, research approach | Quality of impact pathway (describes assumptions and connections between activities, outputs, outcomes and intended impact; project level Theory of Change is linked to programme level of Theory of Change; organized in such a way that it can be used efficiently for monitoring, evaluation and learning purposes)

Table 2: Enabling contribution criteria of WOTRO’s Research for Development approach

The project leaders emphasised that to meet certain criteria stipulated by WOTRO, dedicated capacity and budgets are required, however, they were not always allowed to budget for this realistically. This refers to travel budgets for research uptake purposes, communication budgets, post-project engagement support, and project management budgets for a dedicated staff member to oversee the multi-stakeholder collaboration process.

**Selection procedure**

WOTRO composes an International Advisory Committee (IAC) for each call to assess the scientific quality and the development relevance of submitted project proposals. The IAC consists of both academics and practitioners - from the South and North – who are known and respected for their expertise on the themes of the programme. All IAC members score the proposals on both components: scientific quality and development relevance. Questions were raised whether this procedure is appropriate, as practitioners may not always have the required insight into scientific quality and vice versa, academic experts may not always be the best judges of development relevance.

To meet the requests made by the Dutch Ministries for quicker (insight into) results, the SRoL programme experimented with introducing short-term research projects with lower scientific-quality standard requirements ('good' instead of the 'very good' and 'excellent'). This experiment was not experienced positively. Neither WOTRO coordinators nor project leaders considered this a positive experiment.

**Templates & guidelines**

For certain programmes, WOTRO provided specific support in the inception phase of the projects that included guidance in developing an Impact Pathway, specific information on the role division between the Knowledge Platform and WOTRO, descriptions for joint proposal development workshops and/or guidelines for stakeholder analysis to support research uptake. Project leaders conveyed their appreciation for such guidance. It became apparent throughout the pilot study that more guidance on how to meet the Research for Development expectations of WOTRO and the MFA is required.
Knowledge of Impact Pathways is limited or even non-existent among consortia and research uptake activities are new frontiers for many.

Suggestions

‒ to include WOTRO as fund manager also in the thematic decision-making stages as advisory member. This will ensure that new programmes build on the long-term experience of WOTRO in designing and managing Research for Development programmes.

‒ to organise a Theory of Change workshop prior to the formulation of the call for Proposals in order to thoroughly discuss and compare assumptions and expectations of the programme; workshop should at least include the relevant department head of MFA, member of the Knowledge Platform secretariat and the WOTRO coordinator and possibly also a IAC member.

‒ to ensure relevant LMIC stakeholders are involved in determining, or minimally providing feedback on, the decision-making process about the thematic focus of the calls.

‒ to use the enabling criteria as guideline for designing new programmes to ensure consistency in within and between calls and the possibility for structured procedures.

‒ to ensure that the project requirements (e.g. for stakeholder engagement and knowledge sharing) and the associated budgets are aligned.

‒ to include in the requirements for project proposals the explicit expectation that intermediate results of the research will be shared.

‒ to design programmes in such a way that structural support to research consortia for meeting the (new) Research for Development criteria can be provided – this implies that sufficient funding for knowledge management should be available at project as well as programme level.

Programme management and WOTRO interventions during project

Suggestions for level & timing of interventions

WOTRO has a diverse set of interventions that it offers to research consortia across programmes. Currently, there is no structured approach in terms of a ‘standard (minimum) package’ of interventions that is offered to consortia. Rather, the support efforts provided depend on the role assigned to WOTRO (or the division of roles between WOTRO and the KPs), the capacities of WOTRO programme coordinators and budget available, as well as ambitions of the programme or respective Call. Since the introduction at WOTRO of a dedicated Research Uptake manager in 2014, the interventions have gradually become more structured and attuned to the needs of the consortia.

The pilot study shows that certain interventions have proved especially relevant or beneficial to consortia in the development of their research proposals, implementation and/or engagement with policy and practice. A selection of such ‘must have interventions’ is listed below:

‒ Inception phase:
  o Proposal development workshop
  o Impact pathway and Theory of Change workshop
  o Stakeholder Analysis workshop

‒ Engagement & uptake:
  o Kick-off workshop (including stakeholder consultation) @ project level
  o Mid-term meeting (including stakeholder consultation) @ project level
  o Country or regional meeting @ call level
  o Annual meeting @ call level

Which components (workshops, trainings, exercises, etc.) are offered as part of these ‘must have’ interventions can be determined on case to case basis. The interventions are complementary to the individual support provided by WOTRO coordinators to the consortia on ad hoc basis.
Role division with KPs

Six of the eight projects reviewed in this pilot study are associated with the Dutch Knowledge Platform setup. This means that the objectives were pursued and supported by both WOTRO (inner circle stakeholders) and by the respective Knowledge Platform Secretariat (outer circle stakeholders). The roles and responsibilities between WOTRO coordinators and Knowledge Platform secretariats were not always clearly defined, sometimes causing confusion for the research consortia about, for instance, to whom to communicate or report what at which stage of the research, as well as about what to expect in terms of support. It was emphasised that, for future reference, it is essential that knowledge management expectations are clearly defined from the start: How will we pursue our knowledge sharing goals? Who will we target with the knowledge and how and whose responsibility is this? By determining answers to such questions early on, efficiency and effectiveness of knowledge management can be improved.

Research coordinator is not same as ‘Research for Development’ coordinator

WOTRO expects one principle investigator to take the lead in the coordination of research projects. However, findings from this pilot study suggest that the tasks associated with running a project, and those associated with running a more traditionally scientific-oriented research project, differ considerably. The tasks of the principle investigator under the WOTRO projects include that of research coordinator, multi- stakeholder partnership manager, finance controller, and knowledge manager. Capacities that not necessarily are best represented in one individual, nor does it seem realistic to expect this.

Suggestions

‒ WOTRO should focus on what has been its strength all along, that is, managing the research projects implemented by the consortia. This includes, by means of a robust monitoring and evaluation structure, ensuring that consortia share intermediate results (with the inner circle). Clear agreements for collaboration should be in place to ensure that these results can be used by the KPs who are responsible for sharing these with outer circle stakeholders.
‒ to ensure that Research for Development projects are awarded dedicated capacity - both in fte and associated budgets – to be able to include a R4D manager with the relevant qualities for this challenging task.

Monitoring & Evaluation

Call for intermediate results

A strong call is being made for sharing of intermediate results of long-term research projects that are funded by WOTRO with the ambition to strengthen development efforts, both in policy and practice. To address this demand, projects with short timeframes (shortest 6 months) were introduced in some programmes. However, the pilot study shows that this may not be the most appropriate solution. Because of the ‘pressure-cooker’ nature of the short-term projects, scientific quality and ground-breaking insights may be limited, if not diminished. In addition, the capacity of WOTRO coordinators to monitor and support 30 to 40 short-term projects is insufficient in the current organisational structure. Therefore, it was suggested that research projects do not necessarily need to be shortened, rather, the expectations for more intermediate result sharing should be made more explicit and the necessary support (capacity and budgetary) for this must be provided.

Coherence in programmes

In some calls, projects are asked to describe in what way their research contributes to overarching programme level goals and in only few consortia are asked to report on this in self-assessments. However, this is not a standard procedure for all calls. As a result, some programmes consist of rather loosely connected research projects, the findings of which are difficult to lift to a higher level of analysis. For WOTRO it would be interesting to be able to raise results from individual projects to
discussions that are taking place at higher levels (such as MFA policy priorities, the MASPs at Embassy levels, or UN SDG discussions). This would reduce the fragmentation of funded research, and lead to more sustainable impact and learning towards improved development practice and policy. In addition, programme level analysis and learning would enhance the chances that scientific insights from the projects contribute to cutting-edge academic debates, as well as offer opportunities for sharing and testing of innovative scientific methods and approaches.

**Considering project achievements**

WOTRO has procedures in place that it can fall back on in case research consortia do not meet the objectives or goals as outlined in their project proposal. At the time of the mid-term assessments, the IAC can provide suggestions for improvements in research implementation and urge the consortia to make necessary adjustments to their approach. Project leaders who received such suggestions adopted the recommendations and made the necessary changes to their approach. However, overall, WOTRO’s monitoring and evaluation procedures seem insufficiently developed to assess the project’s progress in terms of achieving outcomes, both during the project period and after completion. The consequent flexibility offered to consortia, and the limited interim supervision or monitoring by WOTRO, is appreciated by most project leaders because this in turn gives them the flexibility that is often needed when working in a multi-stakeholder partnership. However, this approach also means that impact pathways that were developed at the start of research projects, are not being used as the monitoring and evaluation tools they are meant to be. In many cases, this is missed opportunity for strengthening outcomes towards impact.

**Suggestions**

- to allow intermediate results sharing to take place, stronger Monitoring and Evaluation structures should be set up, in order to ensure that long-term projects have short-term cycles of monitoring. This should be made clear from the start (in the calls) so that consortia applying for the research funds are fully aware of the responsibilities and expectations they will be taking on.
- to ensure synergy and opportunities for higher-level use of research outcomes, WOTRO should encourage research projects to not only work towards addressing their own research questions, but also make clear how their outcomes are relevant to programme/Call level goals. This can be stimulated by organising programme-level interventions such as country or regional meetings and annual meetings.
Annex 1: Theory of Change

Global, sustainable and inclusive change resulting from research-based knowledge, with a special focus on benefiting LMICs

1. Enhanced synergy and critical reflection in generation, sharing and use of knowledge for development

2. Changed/confirmed approaches in policy and practice inspired by newly generated insights

3. Recognised contribution to new paradigms and concepts benefiting development

4. Established enhanced use of high-quality research-based knowledge for development

5. Improved alignment to national and international agenda’s and agenda setting

6. Generated high-quality, interdisciplinary knowledge for development

7. Developed insights in complex development issues that challenge or improve current development approaches

8. Established sustained North South and multi-stakeholder research partnership

9. Established structural engagement with policy and practice stakeholders

- Strengthened research capacity
- Improved approaches to and insights on knowledge brokering
- Increased interest among policy & practice communities
- Increased interest among scientific community for research for development
- Integrated different types of knowledge
## Annex 2: Enabling contribution criteria of WOTRO’s approach

### Scientific and/or research quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contribution criteria</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Scoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Scientific rigor</strong></td>
<td>Appropriate and coherent mix of approaches and methods (e.g., quantitative and qualitative, longitudinal and cross-sectional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Potential to generating new, evidence-based knowledge and insights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Interdisciplinarity</strong></td>
<td>Appropriate mix of scientific disciplines (e.g., social and natural sciences)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Effective scientific leadership &amp; management structure that assures application of interdisciplinary approach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Relevance for (innovation in) development

| 3                     | **Co-creation**                                                                                                                               | Demand-driven approach:                                                                                                           |
|                       |                                                                                                                                           | a. Joint definition of the problem statement and research question(s) with consortium members and/or with stakeholders                   |
|                       |                                                                                                                                           | b. Relevance of the research question(s) and outcome(s) for the intended user(s) / stakeholder(s)                                    |
|                       |                                                                                                                                           | Appropriate mix of types of evidence (tacit, explicit, scientific, local ...)                                                       |
|                       |                                                                                                                                           | Collaborative, multi-stakeholder implementation of research activities (identification, defining, execution, evaluate & adapt)           |
|                       |                                                                                                                                           | Composition of partnership:                                                                                                         |
|                       |                                                                                                                                           | a. Balanced geographical representation consortium members (North-South/South-South)                                                |
|                       |                                                                                                                                           | b. Diversity in types of consortium members (academic/private/NGO/public)                                                          |
|                       |                                                                                                                                           | c. Research uptake capacity of consortium members                                                                                |
| 4                     | **Adaptive, reflexive research approach**                                                                                                 | Quality of impact pathway: project level Theory of Change (outputs, outcomes and impact) is linked to programme level Theory of Change |
|                       |                                                                                                                                           | Robustness of Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning structure                                                                      |


Annex 3: Scoring of enabling contribution criteria

**CRITERIUM 1 = SCIENTIFIC RIGOUR**

*Appropriate mix of approaches and methods (e.g., quantitative and qualitative, longitudinal and cross-sectional)*

- 1 = Not explicitly considered
- 2 = Appropriate set of methods proposed
- 3 = Different methods combined/interwoven

*Potential to generating new, evidence-based knowledge and insights*

- 1 = Not explicitly considered
- 2 = explicitly considered
- 3 = considered as a fundamental purpose of the project / fundamental to project design

**CRITERIUM 2 = INTERDISCIPLINARITY**

*Appropriate mix of scientific disciplines (e.g., social and natural sciences)*

- 1 = not explicitly considered
- 2 = explicitly considered
- 3 = considered as a fundamental purpose of the project / fundamental to project design

*Effective leadership & management structure that assures application of interdisciplinary approach*

- 1 = not explicitly considered
- 2 = explicitly considered
- 3 = considered as fundamental to project design

**CRITERIUM 3: CO-CREATION**

*Demand-driven approach*

a/b) *Origin of research question:*

- 1 = Project refers to existing documents but has not actively involved consortium members/stakeholders
- 2 = Project has engaged consortium members/stakeholders in developing the research question(s)
- 3 = Project has engaged several consortium members/stakeholders to formulate the purpose of the

  c) *Relevance for users/stakeholders*

- 1 = No policy-oriented output or if output, it emerged in ad-hoc way during the project
- 2 = Very basic policy-oriented output and activities
- 3 = Project can show to have strategically planned for and considered the demand and potential use of the project outcomes for stakeholders (incl. range of outputs/activities)

*Appropriate mix of types of evidence (tacit, explicit, scientific, local ...)*

- 1 = not explicitly considered
- 2 = explicitly considered
3 = considered as a fundamental purpose of the project / fundamental to project design

**Collaborative implementation**

1 = Effective multi-stakeholder involvement of consortium members only begins after problem definition

2 = Effective multi-stakeholder engagement of consortium members begins with joint problem definition

3 = Multi-stakeholder engagement of consortium members is a purposeful, iterative process that affects process design and implementation

**Quality of collaboration / composition of partnership**

a) **Balanced geographical representation consortium members (North-South/South-South)**

1 = Balanced representation is considered a precondition for project definition and articulation

2 = Balanced representation is considered a precondition for project definition and articulation, as well as for achieving project results

3 = Strengthening the partnership and the capacities of its members is a key outcome of the project

b) **Diversity in types of consortium members (academic/private/NGO/public)**

1 = Diversity in types of members is considered a precondition for project definition and articulation

2 = Diversity in types of members is considered a precondition for project definition and articulation, as well as for achieving project results

3 = Strengthening the partnership and the capacities of its members is a key outcome of the project

c) **Research uptake capacity of consortium members**

1 = Research uptake capacity is considered a precondition for project definition and articulation

2 = Research uptake capacity is considered a precondition for project definition and articulation, as well as for achieving project results

3 = Strengthening the partnership and the capacities of its members is a key outcome of the project

**CRITERIUM 4: ADAPTIVE, REFLEXIVE RESEARCH APPROACH**

**Quality of impact pathway**

1 = Impact pathway is not set out at the beginning of the project

2 = Comprehensive and detailed impact pathway (with context analysis) is set out at the beginning of the project and used for reporting purposes

3 = Impact pathway is set out at the beginning of the project, with partners and stakeholders, it provides a logical causal flow between output, outcome and impact and clearly relates to project objectives and activities to instil learning beyond reporting

**Robustness of Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning structure**

1 = Basic Monitoring and Evaluation plan developed for meeting reporting requirements

2 = Monitoring and Evaluation Plan developed in line with Impact Pathway that includes reflexive components which support learning

3 = Regular monitoring of progress and assumptions with partners and stakeholders on the basis of the impact pathways, revisited assumptions and learning is fed back into research approach,
including in uptake strategies.
Annex 4: Executive summary of survey results

- A total of 60 respondents participated in the survey, out of 206 that were invited (227 contacts, of which 21 were bounced). This amounts to a response rate of 30%.
- 48% of respondents were participants in the events (in contrast to organisers or panellists)
- 81% states that “insights shared at the event did meet my interest, and answered important policy or practice issues faced in my work”
- Over 90% has gained new information during their participation, of which 54% argues that this was complementary to their existing knowledge
- Most respondents gained this information from exchanges with participants during events
- 57% argues that “the event inspired me to change my professional approach to the topic at hand”
- 55% says “I/my organization has used the information, insights and/or knowledge to change or improve certain practices”
- Experiences with active exchanges with stakeholders after the event has taken place are diverse
- 40 respondents explain in open ended question in what way their participation has influenced their work

![Survey respondents per type of organisation](image)
Annex 5: Case studies

Case: Conflict sensitive employment in Afghanistan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project title</th>
<th>Conflict Sensitive Employment under Construction: Peace and Stability Strategies for the Private Sector in Afghanistan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>Laboratory screening of conditions that threaten maternal and child health is a key component of antenatal care (ANC) and was crucial to the achievement of former MDG5 on maternal health. The project used a transdisciplinary approach linking Dutch, Malian and French research institutions with local stakeholders to understand the underutilization of laboratory tests in ANC in Senegal, by looking at organisational, political, sociocultural and historical factors. The project aimed to generate recommendations for the improvement of medical laboratory services and hence the quality of ANC in Senegal. (NB. Project was originally planned to take place in Mali).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme</td>
<td>Security &amp; Rule of Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>36 months (Feb 2015 - Feb 2018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consortium lead</td>
<td>Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC) independent, non-profit research organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project coordinator</td>
<td>Prof. C.S. Schetter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Summary of outcomes | - Project coined a new concept: Conflict-sensitive employment (CSE).  
- Project developed and tested context-specific CSE Framework with and for CIT companies, 5 of which have now integrated the CSEF into their operations.  
- Project developed a concept CSE Framework for donors and investors (to embed CSE in investment strategies). This CSEF is being further developed based on interest and active input from the World Bank and German Development Bank.  
- The Dutch MFA showed great interest in the project findings and has taken them on board in the development of its Theory of Change for Employment for Stability. |
### Overview of project outputs

#### Co-create

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of scientific outputs produced:</th>
<th>2 working papers (BICC/IA, 2017)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 working paper (BICC/TLO, 2017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MA thesis, Kabul University, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MSc thesis, UNU/Bonn Uni, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MBA thesis, Kardan University, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Planned: 2 academic journal articles (Economics journal, Peace &amp; Conflict Studies journal)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of strategic-focused outputs produced:</th>
<th>1 CSEF for Afghan CIT companies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 CSEF for donors and investors (concept; BICC/IA/TLO, 2018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Still planned: 1 policy brief for international donors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Share

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of applied and strategic-focused engagement</th>
<th>3 workshops in Afghanistan: kick-off (2015), mid-term, final (Jan 2018)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 workshop Brussels (Jan 2018); London (Jan 2018); final workshop Bonn (Feb 2018).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presentation at KPSRoL annual meeting 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 project website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 blog on KPSRoL website</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(# of times) approached by stakeholders outside project to provide input based on project findings:</th>
<th>Dutch MFA used project findings for development of Theory of Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>World Bank and German Development Bank are very interested in the CSEF for donors and investors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Case: Contribution of inclusive business strategies to inclusive development in Sub-Saharan Africa**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project title</th>
<th>How can inclusive business strategies contribute to inclusive development in Sub-Saharan Africa?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Abstract</strong></td>
<td>Dutch firms investing in Africa are increasingly searching for more inclusive business models in order to contribute to inclusive growth/development of a country. It is suggested that partnerships with non-market actors like NGOs and (local) governments are a precondition for this to happen. In the development policy discourse, this trend refers to the introduction of public-private-partnerships (PPPs) to more effectively enhance sustainable development. The way these partnerships can be effectively integrated in actual business models - and thus help create a positive relationship between business strategies and inclusive growth at the national level - has not yet been systematically researched nor practically grasped. This project explored (1) the characteristics of inclusive business models and (2) the critical success factors for effectively implementing this strategy through PPPs for a sample of frontrunner Dutch companies and NGOs in five different East-African countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Programme</strong></td>
<td>Research for Inclusive Development (RIDDSA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration</strong></td>
<td>30 months (October 2014 – August 2017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Country</strong></td>
<td>Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda, Uganda, and Tanzania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consortium lead</strong></td>
<td>Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam – Rotterdam School of Management (RSM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project coordinator</strong></td>
<td>Prof. Rob J.M. van Tulder</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Summary of outcomes** | - Introduction of ‘partnering space’ as applied concept for inclusive business analysis.  
- New diagnostic tool introduced that allows for analysing the size and nature of the institutional void and related trust gaps that influence opportunities for inclusive business.  
- Philips and Safaricom have promoted the research findings and NABC adopted lessons learned for strategic planning.  
- Embassies have shown willingness to adopt research findings in agenda-setting.  
- Approaches to ‘inclusive business models’ have been adopted in curricula at an African training institute (ESAMI) and at the Partnership Resource Centre masters course at Erasmus University. |
**Overview of project outputs**

Datasets following the inclusive business strategies surveys & case studies |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of applied-focused outputs produced</th>
<th>An adapted Business Model Canvas for mapping inclusive business models A tool for designing transitioning towards inclusive business strategies A tool for identifying and designing policy responses to foster inclusiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of strategic-focused outputs produced</td>
<td>2 policy briefs submitted to INCLUDE to inform policy formulation at The Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share</td>
<td><strong># of scientific sharing events:</strong> Global Social Business Summit (Berlin) European International Business Association Conference (Vienna) Science Policy Research Conference (Sussex) European Conference on Responsibility, Sustainability and Social Entrepreneurship (Rome)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of applied and strategic-focused engagement</td>
<td>2 kick-off meetings (Rotterdam &amp; Arusha) 5 stakeholder dialogues in 4 African countries (Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda and Tanzania) and the Netherlands 2 executive trainings for managers to share practical lessons for devising inclusive business models Mid-term conference (Kampala &amp; Rotterdam) 2 closing conferences (Nairobi &amp; Rotterdam) to share final results Media reports were released through (social media) channels &amp; magazines Participation in Africa Works conference (organised workshop on ‘Financial Inclusive business’) Participation in Max Havelaar Lecture (organised workshop on ‘Frugal Innovation’) KEPSA (Kenya Labour Organization) published article on project Participation at INCLUDE and other conferences to provide input in policy discussions Toolkit was presented at the final Nairobi conference (including booklet on ‘mapping’, leadership, tipping points, canvas modeling and policy challenges)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case: Improving economic opportunity interventions for young people in fragile settings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project title</th>
<th>Youth exclusion and violence in Burundi and South Sudan: Improving economic opportunity interventions for young people in fragile settings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Abstract      | Interventions in fragile settings concerning economic opportunities for youth are based largely on assumptions that are untested at the local level. Practitioners acknowledge that a limited understanding of youth rationalities and local level conflict dynamics stand in the way of designing economic opportunities interventions that meaningfully contribute to (local level) stability. Taking youth economic exclusion rather than opportunity costs of violence as a starting point, this research aimed to provide organisations with the evidence base and the tools to design more effective interventions. The research aimed to  
  - generate insights on the dynamics of youth socio-economic exclusion  
  - translate these insights to a wider set of recommendations for organisations working in fragile settings in order to increase their impact on stability.  
Findings from collaborative research and tool development in Burundi and South Sudan were meant to feed into the Theories of Change of consortium members and be used for NGO programming. |
| Programme     | Security and Rule of Law |
| Duration      | 6 months (May 2016 –December 2016 ) |
| Country       | Burundi and South Sudan |
| Consortium lead | Wageningen University & Research, the Netherlands |
| Project coordinator | Dr ir. G. van der Haar |
| Summary of outcomes |  
  - Project partner contributed to the Theory of Change development at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for its strategic approach in fragile settings.  
  - The research resulted in the creation of an online resource: the ‘Toolbox on targeting youth economic exclusion in fragile settings’, which is meant to help organisations think through, map and improve economic opportunity interventions for youth in fragile settings. |
### Overview of project outputs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Co-create</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of scientific outputs produced:</td>
<td>1 scientific publication (being written)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of applied-focused outputs produced:</td>
<td>1 online toolbox to help organisations improve economic opportunity interventions for youth in fragile settings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of strategic-focused outputs produced:</td>
<td>1 policy brief</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Share</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| # of applied and strategic-focused engagement: | 2 internal consortium workshops  
2 expert meetings in the Netherlands |
## Case: Improving food cereals with milk protein in Uganda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project title</th>
<th>Macro nutrient fortification of first-line cereals with milk protein to produce affordable value added cereal products</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>Most efforts in cereal fortification have been aimed at micronutrients with less focus on macronutrients for some key foods. Macronutrients are essential for the body to perform various roles and functions. In response to the macronutrient deficiency challenge, this project intended to produce affordable value-added flours for children and women (pregnant and lactating), and for the general population. The project aimed to improve the current efforts for cereal milk protein-fortification. The research focused on improving the nutritional value of the current products, exploring food-based processing technologies to scale-up production, and exploring ways to make products more affordable and widely commercialized in Uganda and other East African countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme</td>
<td>Food &amp; Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>30 months (1 January 2015 – 1 July 2017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consortium lead</td>
<td>Value Addition Institute (VAI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project coordinator</td>
<td>Francis T. Tucungwirwe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Summary of outcomes

- Scientific evidence that proves millet flour is suitable for use as a weaning food; the millet-based composite flour makes a significant contribution to the recommended dietary allowance (RDA); the composite flour produced from millet flour, vegetables and skimmed milk powders is shelf stable and can be stored.

- Production of a certified (with highest Ugandan quality mark), affordable product that helps to reduce malnutrition among children has been marketed and scaled (production increased by a factor 7).

- The Ugandan Minister of State for Relief and Disaster Preparedness has committed to sign a supplying contract for the product, which will thus also reach to camps for refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs) in the border regions.

- Relationship established with Dutch processors & Ugandan SME.
**Overview of project outputs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Co-create</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of scientific outputs produced:</td>
<td>– 2 publications (under review):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Tumwine, G. et al (<em>forthcoming</em>) Optimizing the process for the production of nutrient enhanced millet based composite flour using skimmed milk powder and vegetables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Tumwine, G. et al (<em>forthcoming</em>) Effect of vegetables and skimmed milk powders on the shelf stability and sensory properties of porridge from millet based composite flour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of applied-focused outputs produced:</td>
<td>– 1 product fact-sheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– 1 guide for suppliers, farmers or stockists</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Share</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of scientific sharing events:</td>
<td>– 1 in-house dissemination meeting at Makerere University with key staff relevant to nutrition issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of applied and strategic-focused engagement:</td>
<td>– Product promotions and dissemination events held in Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya, and among Southern Sudanese communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Discussions with Minister of State for Relief and Disaster Preparedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Discussions with various non-profit organisations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| (# of times) approached by stakeholders outside project to provide input based on project findings: | – Individuals and organisations buy the product, but have not yet requested for research evidence although this has been developed under the open-source mandate of WOTRO |
## Case: Improving sustainability in Indonesia’s tuna supply chain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project title</th>
<th>Technology innovations towards sustainability in Indonesia’s tuna supply chains</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>Informational uncertainties in the western and central Pacific Ocean tuna fisheries threaten the sustainability of tuna stocks and the livelihoods of fishing communities. This is especially true in Indonesia, where a high reliance on tuna for domestic fish consumption coupled with large tuna exports and disparate and disaggregated management means that fishing pressure will likely continue to increase in order to meet domestic and export demand. The ability of these tuna fisheries to support livelihoods, appetites and businesses relies in part on the extent to which information is provided by and communicated to fishermen and processors in Indonesia. In response, this project aimed to develop a traceability-based technology (TBT) platform that creates bidirectional information exchange between Indonesian fishermen, processors and traders, helping to link fishermen with fisheries information and global markets, and helping processors and traders to meet informational requirements originating from importing regions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme</td>
<td>Food &amp; Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>18 months (May 2015 - February 2017 - extension granted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consortium lead</td>
<td>Masyarakat dan Perikanan Indonesia (MDPI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project coordinator</td>
<td>Mr Aditya Surono</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of outcomes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- The four TBTs that were developed by the project, have been taken up and are being used throughout the supply chain for Fair Trade certified tuna: small-scale fishers use SpotTrace GPS-based technology; suppliers use IFish app; enumerators use DOCK app; processors use open source Tally-O.  
- Certain data generated by the TBTs already feeds into provincial and national government information systems and is for instance being used for development of a national Harvest Strategy for Tuna.  
- A stronger understanding of the necessity of introducing traceability and TBTs, and the opportunities this creates for the Indonesian fisheries sector, on the part of both fishers and government.  
- Fishers use TBT data to make better business & fishing trip decisions; because of capacity building efforts by the project they are moreover in a better position to negotiate their prices.  
- MDPI became the implementing partner for the USAID Oceans programme, which aims to expand TBTs developed by the project to more supply chains. |
### Overview of project outputs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Co-create</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong># of scientific outputs produced:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doddema et al. (Forthcoming). Tuna processing in practice – traceability interventions and responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bailey et al. (Forthcoming). Technology innovations and interventions to improve traceability and sustainability in small-scale fisheries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bailey et al. (Forthcoming). What’s the ROI in seafood traceability?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong># of applied-focused outputs produced</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 TBTs (co-)developed by the project: SpotTrace GPS-based technology for fishers; IFish app for suppliers; DOCK app for enumerators; Tally-O for processors. Tally-O source code (software and database) is openly available on github for anyone wanting to use the system</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Share</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong># of scientific sharing events:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 conference presentations:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017 SeaWeb Sustainable Seafood Summit;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017 Fishermen and Scientists Research Society meeting;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halifax, Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong># of applied and strategic-focused engagement:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Management Committee (DMC) meetings convened twice per year per province</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity development trainings for technology use to 20 fishers and 2 suppliers; dissemination of research findings to 50 fishers in one-on-one meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video ‘Do you know where your tuna comes from?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(# of times) approached by stakeholders outside project to provide input based on project findings:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID asked MDPI to become its implementing partner for the Oceans programme, which aims to expand TBTs developed by the project to more supply chains.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case: Improving the use of laboratory services for antenatal care in Senegal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project title</th>
<th>Addressing Social, Cultural and Historical Factors Limiting the Contribution of Medical Laboratory services to antenatal care in Mali (SociaLab)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>Laboratory screening of conditions that threaten maternal and child health is a key component of antenatal care (ANC) and was crucial to the achievement of former MDG5 on maternal health. The project used a transdisciplinary approach linking Dutch, Malian and French research institutions with local stakeholders to understand the underutilization of laboratory tests in ANC in Senegal, by looking at organisational, political, sociocultural and historical factors. The project aimed to generate recommendations for the improvement of medical laboratory services and hence the quality of ANC in Senegal. (NB. Project was originally planned to take place in Mali).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme</td>
<td>Global Health Policy and Health Systems Research programme (GPHSR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>36 months: October 2012-October 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Senegal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consortium lead</td>
<td>Amsterdam Institute for Global Health and Development (AIGHD), Academic Medical Center, Amsterdam, the Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project coordinator</td>
<td>Dr Pascale Ondoa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Summary of outcomes | - The project can claim a pioneering role academically for looking at a diversity of factors contributing to test utilisation. This has become an important topic in international discussions (related to HIV rather than maternal health).  
- The Directorate of Laboratories and the Directorate of Reproductive Health in Senegal started a dialogue on how to increase the uptake of ANC testing and how to achieve a more coherence between the different units.  
- Project resulted in lasting relationships between AIGHD and the anthropology department at the UvA, based on their appreciation of working together on an interdisciplinary research project. |
## Overview of project outputs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Co-create</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of scientific outputs produced:</td>
<td>1 academic article in SSM – Population Health (open access, peer-reviewed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of applied-focused outputs produced:</td>
<td>1 fact sheet 2015 (English &amp; French)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 posters (midwives &amp; lab personnel)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Share</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of scientific sharing events:</td>
<td>4 conference papers and posters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Global Symposium Health Systems Cape Town 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>African Society for Laboratory Medicine Conference, Cape Town South Africa 2014 and 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The International Pharmaceutical Forum of Bamako, Mali 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Global Symposium Health Systems Vancouver 2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of applied and strategic-focused engagement:</th>
<th>Kick-off meeting Senegal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KTNet inaugural partners meeting, Kampala Nov 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KTNet annual partners meeting, Addis Abeba Jan 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KTNet annual partners meeting, Kampala July 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Two-day final workshop incl. stakeholder consultation in Senegal 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 Blogs on KTNet Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Updates of project in:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– 3 DL Newsletter (Directorate Laboratories; Bulletin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– 4 media articles about dissemination workshop</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Case: Nationalization of extractive industries, conflict and co-operation**

**Project title**
Nationalization of extractive industries, conflict and co-operation in Bolivia and Ecuador (NEBE)

**Abstract**
Natural resources have been central to conflicts in Latin America because of their negative environmental, socioeconomic and cultural impacts. Several leftist governments have been nationalizing the sector to overcome these conflicts. ISS/EUR, Hivos, Lidema (Bolivia) and Universidad San Francisco de Quito studied the nationalization's impact on conflict and co-operation over natural resources in Bolivia and Ecuador. The research investigated dynamics of conflict creation and co-operation, feasibility of long-term strategies to deal with revenues and to enhance international co-operation, and the political economy of alternative development strategies. Development objectives were to promote and contribute to debates and policy dialogue on nationalization of extractive industries and to improve levels of cooperation between civil society actors, local government and multi-national corporations on extractive industries. Capacity building objectives were to improve participants' ability to engage in transdisciplinary research and to enhance the effectiveness of their interventions.

**Programme**
Conflict and Cooperation over Natural Resources (CoCooN)

**Duration**
5 years, (First phase: 2011-2013, up-scaling phase: 2013-2016)

**Country**
Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru (from 2011)

**Consortium lead**
Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam / International Institute of Social Studies (ISS)

**Project coordinator**
Prof. S. M. Murshed

**Summary of outcomes**
- New concept ‘extractive imperative’ introduced and adopted in academic debates.
- Innovative research approach developed on community monitoring integrated with remote sensing providing insight into environmental degradation combined with the generation of development activities. Indigenous federations have agreed (by MoU) to replicate monitoring activities. Local monitoring has led to: Ministry of Environment declaring environmental emergency; local community filing charges against multinational extraction company; information used in dialogue with multinational and policy-makers.
- Law proposals developed in Peru and Ecuador based on the NEBE experience with community-based monitoring.
### Overview of project outputs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Co-create</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of scientific outputs produced:</td>
<td>14 academic peer-reviewed publications:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Special issue (Extractive Imperative) of academic journal (Extractive Industries and Society)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PhD thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of applied-focused outputs produced:</td>
<td>1 research approach developed (community monitoring) applied in 4 cases (Loreto, Orellana, La Paz, Chaco)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PowerCube (tool for power relations assessment) applied to conflict analysis in Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 databases on local oil spills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8 case studies (+ 1 in Peru)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of strategic-focused outputs produced:</td>
<td>3 alternative policy proposals have been developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong># of scientific sharing events:</strong></td>
<td>Lectures were given by project leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Project staff member became Member of the Advisory Board at Institute of Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of the University of San Francisco of Quito</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Project staff member joined the Research Working Group Mega at Tulane University in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New Orleans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong># of applied and strategic-focused engagement:</strong></td>
<td>Collaboration with 17 local organisations (5 in Peru, 7 in Ecuador, and 5 in Bolivia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MoUs signed with indigenous federations to replicate monitoring activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17 events organised (capacity building event; workshops/training courses/exchange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>events)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 national level debates organised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Policy recommendations presented for community-based monitoring of extractive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>industries &amp; participation of Indigenous Leaders at the UN Forum on Business &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 websites online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Five 15 minutes high-quality documentaries have been made by professional filmmaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in Bolivia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**(# of times) approached by stakeholders outside project to provide</td>
<td>Alliances with 19 organisations and platforms for international advocacy and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>input based on project findings:**</td>
<td>technical support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case: Social protection policies in Ghana and Kenya

**Project title**
Breaking the vicious circle between poverty and ill-health. Are cash transfers and social health protection policies in Ghana and Kenya mutually complementing?

**Abstract**
Social protection is increasingly considered a relevant instrument to induce inclusive growth in LMICs. The idea is that social protection instruments can influence the poverty-illness trap. Cash transfers (CT) and social health protection (SHP) share similar objectives in this regard. This study aims to develop new strategic knowledge on the effectiveness of CT programmes and social health protection policies in Ghana and Kenya. The aim is to address research gaps on a) interaction effects between SP instruments, b) political-economy factors influencing effectiveness of SP. The focus is on women and children among the poorest. The study employs a within-country comparison across time using existing household data. Results are compared across countries.

**Programme**
Research for Inclusive Development in Sub-Saharan Africa (RIDSSA)

**Duration**
24 months (May 2015 - July 2017)

**Country**
Ghana and Kenya

**Consortium lead**
University of Amsterdam, Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences

**Programme group**
Governance and Inclusive Development

**Project coordinator**
Dr Nicky Pouw

**Summary of outcomes**
Project developed an innovative analytical framework linking social protection to multiple dimensions of inclusive development, instead of only to poverty reduction/growth.

Project is one of the first in Africa to go beyond impact evaluation of one specific SP instrument to investigate the interaction effects between different SP programmes and their joint impact on the poor. Project is one of the first internationally to study the impact of the political-economy on the effectiveness of SP instruments for the poor. On both topics, the project contributed to academic debates.

Ministry of Innovation, Nordrhein Westfalen, Germany, invited the project leader (PL) because of interest in the Dutch knowledge platform setup.
## Overview of project outputs

### Co-create

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>INZE working papers Nr 17/6, September 2017: Understanding multiple trajectories of extending social protection to the poor: An analysis of institutional change in Kenya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 article submitted to peer-reviewed Journal of Development Studies. The intention is to turn all four WPs into journal articles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of applied-focused outputs produced:</td>
<td>Workshop reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SHPIG Policy Brief July 2017: Should cash transfers and social health protection go hand in hand?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Share

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of scientific sharing events:</th>
<th>INCLUDE conference September 2016 EADI conference August 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of applied and strategic-focused engagement:</td>
<td>2 workshops Ghana (May 2016, Oct 2017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 workshops Kenya (May 2017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 final workshop Amsterdam (June 2017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dedicated project website with blogs, interviews, research outputs and (YouTube) videos about the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EADI newsletter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(# of times) approached by stakeholders outside project to provide input based on project findings:</td>
<td>Asked to co-chair session at DSA conference, UK, June 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asked to present for Ministry of Innovation, Nordrhein Westfalen, Germany, on the Dutch knowledge platform setup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annex 6: Insights per assumption

Research Partnerships

If sustained North-South and multi-stakeholder research partnerships are in place (outcome 8), this is assumed to lead to more co-creation of high-quality interdisciplinary knowledge and insights for tackling complex development issues (outcomes 6 & 7).

**RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP ➔ CO-CREATION**

**WOTRO’s conditions & interventions**

WOTRO has been encouraging and implementing a multi-stakeholder approach to research since the introduction of the Integrated Programmes (IPs).

The calls that were issued across the five research programmes that are part of this pilot study, all require that research is conducted by a multi-stakeholder consortium, which includes partners from both the North and the South. Eligible categories of stakeholders are: practitioner and research organisations, which can be identified as private for-profit, as private non-profit or as public organisation. Exactly which of these types of stakeholders are required to take part in the consortium differs between the calls, and so does the position within the consortium that these stakeholders are supposed to take up (i.e. main or co-applicant). All calls require that a Dutch stakeholder (either research or practitioner organisation) is included in the consortium. The calls for the Applied Research Fund (ARF) under the Food & Business programme, stipulate that the main applicant must be a private or public practitioner organisation from the South.

WOTRO assumes that if research consortia are made up of multi-stakeholder partnerships, the research questions, methodologies and findings will be developed and realised through a process of co-creation. WOTRO has identified four elements of what co-creation through research partnerships should entail:

- establish a demand-driven approach in which the partnership works towards joint definition of the problem statement & determination of the research question(s);
- encourage collaborative implementation of the research;
- bring together different types of knowledge and/or evidence;
- ensure complementarity of skills and research uptake capacity within the consortium.

WOTRO aims to guarantee these elements by, firstly, stipulating specific conditions for the eligibility of consortia in the calls. For some calls, WOTRO specifically describes how it assesses the quality of collaboration of a multi-stakeholder partnership. It expects synergy, coherence and a high level of integration of scientific knowledge and practitioner’s knowledge; and shared ownership by the consortium partners. To stimulate the process of co-creation in an early stage, WOTRO requires, in certain calls, that consortia reserve a specific budget for organising a joint proposal development workshop, which is also meant to enhance the demand-driven approach of the research.

In addition, WOTRO offers interventions to stimulate co-creation by the consortia by organising programme level or regional meetings where different research consortia meet, with attention paid to (questions about/best practices for) the process of multi-stakeholder collaboration.

**Reflection on project level outcomes**

**Encouraging a demand-driven approach**

Only three projects in this pilot study were required to allocate budget for organising a workshop to develop the full proposal together with all consortium partners (CoCooN, GPHSR, RIDSSA Strategic Actors Call). They saw the added value of the workshop in terms of ‘fine-tuning’ and ‘consensus-building’: how best to approach the research topic considering the local context and dynamics, and how to how to address the interests of relevant stakeholders to ensure the research will deliver
relevant insights for their policy and practice.

Overall, the consortia that submitted their proposals without a prior joint proposal development workshop, emphasised that when working with a multi-stakeholder consortium, it is self-evident that research proposals are co-developed by all partners. Some consortia, on their own initiative, tried to seize opportunities at the start of the project to discuss face-to-face the research direction as well as the joint implementation of the research. Some calls (RIDSSA, SRoL) actively encouraged this by stipulating that the proposal "must include a plan and budget for a kick-off workshop during which the consortium members share their project plans with a broader group of practitioner stakeholders and fine tune the proposal if deemed necessary."

The study shows that in many cases, regardless of whether there was a proposal development or kick-off workshop budgeted for, one or two of the consortium partners took the lead in developing the proposal and formulating the research questions. Yet even if the basic framework for the research was already in place, opportunities to meet face-to-face early in the process did prove useful for seeking consensus around research questions with the multi-stakeholder consortium, fine-tuning the research approach, or validating the relevance of the research questions with an external audience that, in the end, is expected to benefit from the research findings.

**Joint implementation**

In all projects, consortium members including research and practitioner organisations jointly implemented the research. While working in a multi-stakeholder partnership inevitably brings challenges (differences in priorities, capacities, language used, time horizons, etc.), all consortia reviewed for this pilot study state that the multi-stakeholder setup of their projects was vital to the outcomes achieved by the project. Because of the focus of all WOTRO calls, all consortia had to tackle the question of how they could best work together to make sure their research results would contribute to improved policy and practice. The mandatory use of an Impact Pathway played an important role in this. It seems that the Impact Pathway approach helped the consortia, and the lead organisation especially, to think beyond developing high quality knowledge and/or development insights, towards mapping the ways in which the partners could work together to ensure that knowledge and insights reached the intended audiences. For quite a few consortia members, the Impact Pathway was a new approach that required the necessary time investment to understand and apply. Yet they considered it very helpful especially as a reference point for all consortium members to stay on one page and to map out how different work packages contributed to the project’s research goals. The Impact Pathway was also considered a very useful tool to explain the goals and methods of the research to external stakeholders. Overall, this quite flexible approach to mapping out the Impact Pathways was valued much more positively than the more static and rigid log frame approach that researchers were obliged to work with in earlier programmes. WOTRO coordinators share this viewpoint.

**Different types of knowledge and evidence**

WOTRO’s expectation is that, by bringing together different types of stakeholders in one research consortium, different types of knowledge and evidence will contribute to the outcomes of the research. In some projects, especially with a strong private actor involvement, access to their (business) knowledge and data was valuable as a complementary source of knowledge. In other projects the contribution from the non-academic partner was noticed in the qualities they bring into the partnership. What proved very valuable for many projects, was the ‘on-the-ground’ knowledge of private for-profit, practitioner or public partners within the consortium. They provided realistic analyses of the, sometimes volatile, contexts in which research partners wished to conduct their studies. In turn, the evidence generated by academic institutions created leverage for convincing external stakeholders of the validity of the research outcomes and opened doors to policy makers.

**Complementarity of skills**

This also highlights the relevance of the complementarity of skills, and research uptake capacities, within the consortia. In the calls, the consortia were asked to describe the complementary nature of their partnership. Many projects reflected that this complementarity indeed proved essential for
reaching their outcomes. Whether through the availability of (local) networks to facilitate contacts with a wide range of stakeholders (from policy makers to local communities), field office work experience, local insight into security situations, rigorous data collection methodologies, or strengthening the research capacities of local organisations, the consortia appear to be able to lift their studies and their outcomes to a higher level because of this complementarity. Also, in terms of research uptake capacity, consortia benefited from the experience of others. While research partners have more experience in addressing the scientific community and working towards peer-reviewed publications, public and private partners stimulate the development of practice-oriented or strategy-oriented publications (i.e. toolboxes, policy briefs, etc.), which are more easily adopted by policy and practice.

**In conclusion**

**Findings**

- Opportunities for face-to-face engagement with all consortium partners during the proposal development and/or inception stage of the research is considered very helpful for ‘consensus-building’ around research questions and ‘fine-tuning’ of research and knowledge sharing approaches.
- The mandatory use of an Impact Pathway helped consortia to think strategically about enhancing the relevance of research findings; it was also supported the management of the multi-stakeholder projects.
- Private sector partners, especially, can bring alternative sources of evidence and types of knowledge to the table.
- Research conducted in multi-stakeholder partnership can benefit from the diversity of capacities that academic and practitioner (NGO, public, private) organisations bring along, both in terms of strengthening the research implementation and its outcomes and in reaching out to external audiences.

**Challenges**

- Working in multi-stakeholder research partnerships requires dedicated time and capacities, which in many cases was underestimated.
- Southern practitioner organisations require additional support when acting as the main applicant and lead of the consortium. The study showed that organisations may need extra support to perform their role comfortably and to make the most of this learning experience.

**Recommendations**

- To ensure joint ownership, demand-drivenness and enhanced relevance of the research project, the cases show that consortia can benefit from the opportunity to come together face-to-face at the very start of the project, before implementation. This is especially relevant for consortia that cover a wide geographic scope and different types of stakeholders, which do not necessarily have budgets and capacity available for joint proposal development.
- The transdisciplinary approach that has become WOTRO’s hallmark, contributes to its mission of promoting research for development. Working together with different knowledge actors in multi-stakeholder consortia, however, is experienced as both a rewarding and a challenging undertaking. It might be worthwhile to conduct a review focused on the downsides and obstacles experienced as well as the solutions and best practices that consortia have developed. This can be used as input for training/exchange sessions with new consortia at the start of their projects.
- The study shows that the Impact Pathway is a very helpful and valuable tool for research consortia – for planning their research and working towards impact as well as for purposes of internal and external communication about the project goals. However, to capitalise more fully on its potential, WOTRO should provide dedicated support to consortia – especially those for whom this is a new tool – at the start of the research projects. Using the Impact Pathway requires a certain mind-set that cannot be assumed a given among all consortia partners.
Engagement with policy & practice

If structural engagement with policy and practice stakeholders is established (outcome 9) from the very start of the research project, this ensures better alignment to national (and international) agendas and agenda setting (outcome 5).

ENGAGEMENT ➔ ALIGNMENT

WOTRO’s conditions & interventions

In addition to including different types of stakeholders within the consortium, WOTRO also requires that the consortia actively consult a wide range of stakeholders from policy, practice and/or research communities beyond the consortium partners. WOTRO sometimes refers to this as the ‘outer circle’ of relevant stakeholders, compared to the ‘inner circle’ of the consortium stakeholders. Ideally, this outer circle is engaged and consulted in all stages of the research: formulation or elaboration of research questions, validation of preliminary findings, dissemination of research outcomes. WOTRO assumes that this approach will result in better alignment of the research and its outcomes with relevant (national and/or international) development agendas.

In the calls, WOTRO stipulates specific conditions that are meant to encourage engagement with a wide range of stakeholders. These conditions include: active cooperation with the knowledge platforms on sharing of research outcomes and participation in activities (RIDSSA, SRoL, F&B Research); planning, budgeting and pursuing knowledge sharing activities; and producing knowledge products tailored to different audiences.

It is important to note that for most programmes, a division of tasks and responsibilities was made between WOTRO and the Knowledge Platforms concerning the engagement activities. In some programmes this division was explicit, in others more implicit. In general terms, the agreement was that WOTRO took primary responsibility for the inner circle while encouraging the consortium partners to engage outer circle stakeholders. The KPs explicitly focused their work on the outer circle of stakeholders. For many programmes, WOTRO did therefore not have a specific budget for organising engagement-oriented activities with stakeholders beyond the consortium.

Nevertheless, in some programmes, WOTRO did develop and offer a number of interventions to support the consortia in their engagement efforts with external stakeholders. This depended for a large part on the initiative of individual WOTRO coordinators and their relationship with the Knowledge Platform Secretariats. The interventions included: policy influencing workshops, speed-dating sessions with policy makers, stakeholder analysis workshops (AIIM), storytelling workshops, co-organisation of dialogues with relevant ministries, meetings at call level where external stakeholders are invited, public events during mid-term and country/regional meetings.

Reflection on project level outcomes

Engagement with external stakeholders

Especially for the programmes with an ‘applied research’ focus (F&B Research ARF, SRoL applied research), close engagement with external stakeholders was perceived as intrinsic to the set-up of research. Project leaders argue they applied for the applied research calls exactly because of the focus on the relevance of research outcomes for a wider community of stakeholders, which in turn required active engagement with such stakeholders. This engagement took place, firstly, through the organisation of seminars and workshops in the focus countries to which external stakeholders were invited (e.g. project kick-off meetings, events and meetings for validation of preliminary findings, research outcomes dissemination events, etc.). Secondly, engagement also happened on a more individual basis (e.g. meetings with officials and ‘back-door talks’ with policy makers at ministry level) with the help of the networks of consortium partners (both at local, national and international level).
Consortia indicate that engaging the ‘outer circle’ of stakeholders provides very valuable input for the research both in terms of content (better alignment with policy agendas) and process (stakeholders can help facilitate the research through their networks).

Some projects had the explicit ambition to change the (business) approaches of targeted organisations, either within or external to their consortium. For these projects, close and continuous engagement with those stakeholders was essential from the start, in order to increase the project’s relevance and alignment with strategies and agendas of their direct beneficiaries. The fact that WOTRO allowed for budgeting for practical-oriented engagements (pilot studies, proofs of concept, consumer evaluations) was highly appreciated by the consortia.

How were the engagement efforts experienced by the ‘outer circle’? Respondents to the survey (conducted among stakeholders from the outer circle) stated that the most important way that they acquired new information, insights or knowledge from the research projects, was through face-to-face exchange with participants at the events organised. Additionally, the policy briefs distributed at the events were considered helpful, as well as the online content developed, and the follow-up provided by the organisers post-event. Respondents were asked to share examples of the relevance of their engagement with the research project and its results.

Engagement with Dutch government stakeholders

The engagement with Dutch government stakeholders remains a challenge for almost all projects and programmes. Two SRoL projects managed to engage constructively with the relevant departments at the Ministry, which used outcomes from the project as input for the development of their theory of change on employment for stability. For one of the RIDSSA projects reviewed in this pilot study in particular, it proved very difficult to ensure engagement from the Ministry, even though the thematic focus of the calls was developed in close cooperation with the Ministries of Foreign and Economic Affairs. The F&B Research projects, which are closely aligned with MFA policy priorities, had mixed results in terms of Ministry engagement, however, events at call level (e.g. conference) received interest from ministry staff. For CoCooN and GPHSR, the changing policy priorities of the Dutch MFA made it difficult to maintain engagement after the end of the multi-year research programmes, even though initially the thematic focus in both programmes had been developed in cooperation with the MFA.

Relationship with the Knowledge Platforms

In some cases, the relationship with the Knowledge Platform Secretariats was perceived as helpful in establishing new contacts and reaching a wider audience that would otherwise not have been reached. This collaboration proved especially supportive for research projects that struggled to find the right balance between allocating enough time to conduct rigorous academic studies on the one hand and engagement activities on the other hand. Some consortia indicated that the time requested from the Knowledge Platforms and WOTRO to share (intermediate) results and to engage with stakeholders on (preliminary) findings, conflicted with the timing of scientific research and with their desire to share only validated research results. This, in combination with the limitations set to the budget for travel costs, influenced the level of engagement that some research consortia were able to achieve.

Long-term partnerships

By emphasising engagement with relevant stakeholders during the research period, WOTRO moreover aspires to contribute to new and/or long-term partnerships. In some cases, consortia partners continued to work together when opportunities arose, or applied for new research funds together after termination of the WOTRO-funded project. In a few cases, new partnerships and collaboration emerged as a direct result of the project’s outcomes and engagement efforts (e.g. in Indonesia, the local partner was asked to join a new project with USAID that builds on the WOTRO-funded project’s outcomes).

From the responses to the survey it cannot be established whether new, long-term partnerships have emerged between project and external stakeholders (see Figure 3). However, new and useful contacts certainly seem to arise from the engagement activities. Over 60% of the survey respondents state that they have engaged with new stakeholders because of their connection to the research project.
They mention they have either expanded their network and have engaged professionally with new stakeholders, or they have met and exchanged information with stakeholders outside of their regular network.

**Figure 3: Survey responses Q9**

### In conclusion

**Findings**

- Consortia indicate that engaging the ‘outer circle’ of stakeholders provides very valuable input for the research both in terms of content (better alignment with policy agendas) and process (stakeholders can help facilitate the research through their networks).
- Alignment depends highly on when stakeholders are engaged – at which stage in the process – and how. Engagement events that allow for face-to-face contact and exchange of views are considered most useful by both the research consortia and the external stakeholders.

**Challenges**

- There appears to be a conflict between consortia’s ambition to engage stakeholders to increase alignment and relevance (all consortia emphasise the importance of this) and the realisation of this ambition. Stakeholder engagement is very time consuming. Some consortia felt it took away too much time from research.
- Some consortia indicated that the time requested from the Knowledge Platforms and WOTRO to share (intermediate) results and to engage with stakeholders on (preliminary) findings, conflicted with the time investment needed for conducting rigorous scientific research. Researchers feel uncomfortable when they are pushed to share findings too early on.
- Alignment with the Dutch policy agenda does not automatically guarantee engagement by the ministry staff with the projects and their outcomes.
- Concerns were expressed related to the limitations set to the budget for travel costs, which influenced the level of engagement that some research consortia could achieve.

**Recommendations**

- It is very useful to have early on engagement with external stakeholders to enhance alignment with local and national priorities and development agendas. A kick-off workshop that engages the ‘outer circle’ is an opportunity to realise this.
- Knowing which stakeholders should be targeted and how is a challenge for many projects. Providing training on stakeholder analysis and mapping (AIIM) to research consortia is therefore recommended.
It is recommended that WOTRO makes it very clear in the calls for Proposals what exactly is expected of the research consortia in terms of knowledge sharing and engagement activities and commitments. This requirement should be put on paper explicating what the roles and expectations are of both WOTRO and the KPs. At the same time, WOTRO and the KPs should review whether their expectations are feasible for different kinds of projects, and explore ways to improve their collaboration also for the benefit of streamlining (reporting) requests to the consortia.
Alignment with agendas

If research questions are aligned with national and international agendas and agenda-setting (outcome 5) this makes research more relevant for (innovation in) development. The higher the relevance of the research, the higher the chances for research uptake (or use, outcome 4).

ALIGNMENT ➔ RELEVANCE ➔ USE

WOTRO’s conditions & interventions

In the calls, WOTRO sets conditions, to different degrees, regarding the extent to which the research questions must be aligned with overall programme (Call level) objectives, with national agendas within LMICs, with the Multi-annual Strategic Plans (MASPs) of Dutch embassies, with policy priorities of the Dutch MFA and/or with international development agendas. The consortia are expected to describe this alignment in their proposal, and to indicate how they think the research outcomes will contribute to advancing the agendas of the respective stakeholders.

During the selection process of project proposals, WOTRO tries to enhance alignment by making use of an International Advisory Committee (IAC) with renowned international experts on the themes addressed. In cases when research proposals were expected to be aligned with the MASPs, Embassy staff were sometimes consulted as part of the selection process.

While considerable emphasis is placed on ensuring alignment during the phase of proposal development and selection, less rigorous follow-up structures seem to be in place at WOTRO to check whether this alignment is being substantiated during the research period. This seems to be limited to questions asked in the (annual, mid- term and/or final) self-assessment reports. Examples of such questions are: “Please elaborate both on scientific results and explain what the societal relevance is for practice (including policy); Please describe the progress made towards achieving the impact as defined in your project’s impact pathway; Please describe the relevance of project outcomes for the focus of the Call.”

For some programmes, however, WOTRO (sometimes in collaboration with the Knowledge Platform) organised meetings or conferences at programme/Call level where research consortia had the opportunity to exchange progress and insights in order to enhance alignment with the programme-level objectives. Some of these events were complemented with a one-day public event, to exchange learnings with external stakeholders and enhance, where possible, synergy with relevant agendas as well as ongoing activities and debates.

To encourage alignment-thinking at programme and project level, WOTRO requested consortia to use Impact Pathways and/or Theories of Change. This is meant to support consortia in considering more thoroughly the assumptions and linkages that can be drawn throughout the (iterative) research process and in maintaining the focus on relevance and impact. To support such efforts, WOTRO provided workshops on the use of the Impact Pathway and the Theory of Change in most but not all programmes (CoCooN, RIDSSA and F&B Research).

It is important to note that the thematic focus of the calls was rarely determined by WOTRO. For most programmes, this was instigated through external processes that involved Dutch ministries and/or the Knowledge Platforms, or other thematic expert groups. In some cases, WOTRO was only involved in the last stage, when selection criteria, eligibility conditions and procedural guidelines had to be formulated in a call for Proposals. It seems that only for the RIDSSA calls, stakeholders and experts from the South were proactively and consistently consulted in the process of determining the thematic foci of the calls. In other cases, this consultation happened in an informal way through the networks of MFA, Knowledge Platform (through online consultations) or IAC members involved in formulating the calls.
Reflection on project level outcomes

Strong alignment, strong relevance

Project leaders almost unanimously agreed that the stronger the alignment with agendas of the targeted stakeholders, the more relevance a project carries, and the higher the chances are for research uptake (or use of research findings). For one project that focused on nutritional innovation, sensory surveys and market surveys conducted at the start of the project ensured alignment with consumer needs and wishes and provided insights into the opportunities for product development. Other consortia organised various types of events (workshops, seminars, one-on-one meetings, community consultations, meetings with industry, etc.) to get the input from targeted stakeholders about the relevance of the research questions and methods for improvement of their policies and practices. Consortium members based in the research countries played an important part in advising on the relevance of research directions and thus in ensuring alignment and relevance. The complimentary nature of the multi-stakeholder partnership proved especially relevant for achieving these outcomes.

In two programmes (GPHSR, SRoL), project leaders stated that the thematic focus of the call was not, or not sufficiently, aligned with the development agendas or priorities in the countries where the research was supposed to take place. This evidently limited the level of alignment that the individual projects could possibly achieve. In both cases, it was suggested that the Dutch development policy priorities were privileged over the priorities of Southern agendas. In one case (RIDSSA Social Protection), on the other hand, the priorities of Southern experts were taken on board even though the Dutch MFA initially was not in favour of this thematic focus.

Though ensuring alignment certainly does not seem a straightforward exercise, the survey results reveal a positive picture (see Figure 4). The majority of the respondents (80% of ‘outer circle’ stakeholders) find that the topic(s) addressed by the research consortia meet their interests and answer important policy or practice issues that they face in their work. Respondents provided examples of this relevance, which included new methods of data collection (i.e. sensory evaluation) learned, elaborate contextual analyses presented, and new approaches to address their work.
Alignment with the Dutch agenda

In terms of the level of alignment with the policy priorities of relevant Dutch ministries, in particular the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a mixed picture was observed. The GCP and ARF calls of the Food & Business research programme are closely aligned as they are based on the Ministry’s food security policy priorities and Food and Business Knowledge Agenda. The thematic focus of the three RIDSSA calls was developed in close cooperation with the Ministries of Foreign and Economic Affairs. In some cases, see above, it was suggested that alignment with the Dutch policy priorities was privileged over alignment with Southern agendas.

In conclusion

Findings

- Project leaders almost unanimously agree that the stronger the alignment with agendas of the targeted stakeholders, the more relevance a project carries, and the higher the chances are for research uptake (or use of research findings).
- Local consortium partners (based in the research country) play an important role in ensuring alignment with local and national development agendas.
- 80% of ‘outer circle’ stakeholders surveyed, stated that the topic(s) addressed by the research consortia met their interests and answered important policy or practice issues that they face in their work.

Challenges

- The process how and by whom decisions are made about the thematic focus of the calls was outside of the scope of this pilot. This process, however, has a large influence on the possible level of alignment with actual stakeholder agendas on the ground.
- Striking the right balance between alignment with Dutch policy priorities and the priorities of Southern actors (policy and practice) can be a challenge. In two cases, it was suggested that the Dutch development policy priorities were privileged over the priorities of Southern agendas.

Recommendation

- Only a few structures are in place for WOTRO to ensure that alignment is substantiated during the research process. It is recommended that WOTRO makes better use of the mandatory IPs formulated by the consortia, as a tool to monitor progress throughout the project period, and to provide support to consortia to ensure they do not lose sight of their initial ambitions in terms of relevance and impact.
High-quality interdisciplinary knowledge

If high-quality interdisciplinary knowledge for development is created (outcome 6) this contributes to stimulating cutting-edge academic debate which may lead to new paradigms and concepts benefiting development (outcome 3).

**HIGH-QUALITY INTERDISCIPLINARY KNOWLEDGE → USE IN ACADEMIC DEBATE**

**WOTRO’s conditions**

WOTRO promotes transdisciplinary research, which means that researchers from different academic disciplines as well as different types of knowledge actors (academic and non-academic) take part in the research. The participation of different types of knowledge actors is guaranteed through the multi-stakeholder consortia. To guarantee the high quality of the transdisciplinary research, WOTRO stipulates conditions for scientific quality in the calls for Proposals. Scientific quality is assessed on the basis of the robustness of the methodology, the validity of the conceptual framework, relevant scientific experience of the consortia members, and internationally acknowledged research outputs.

Historically, WOTRO’s criteria for eligibility of research proposals required that the scientific quality of proposals was scored ‘excellent’ or ‘very good’. In the applied research calls under SRoL, this scientific standard was adjusted, meaning that also proposals that scored ‘good’ were eligible for funding. This adjustment was made only for projects with a relatively short duration and which were practice or innovation oriented. Short-duration projects were introduced after extensive discussions with different stakeholders about their pleas for quicker results, or better insight into the intermediate results of long-term research projects.

The interventions that WOTRO offers during the project period that are meant to contribute specifically to strengthening the quality of the interdisciplinary research are mostly limited to encouraging scientific exchange, thematic discussions and peer reviews during annual meetings or workshops. For the CoCooN programme, WOTRO coordinated the publication of a scientific book publication as well as a special journal issue.

**Reflection on project level outcomes**

**Transdisciplinary nature of research**

The multi-stakeholder set-up of the consortia can challenge the ambition to realise high-quality interdisciplinary knowledge. The internal dynamics of the consortium partnership influence the project as it requires consensus in determining the research question, the methodology and the preferred outputs. Research questions are no longer purely academically inspired, and in the same way, there is no longer an exclusive focus on scientific outputs. Academic partners in the consortium need to devote time to more practice-oriented and engagement issues, which takes away time from conducting research and analysing findings. While some experience this balancing act as quite a challenge, most consortia state that the input from non-academic partners strengthens the relevance of the scientific research. Non-research partners moreover benefit from capacity building by taking part in the research project, strengthening their methodological and analytical skills.

The eight projects included in this pilot study have managed to publish at least 16 peer-reviewed publications to date as well as a number of book chapters. Another 19 journal articles are under review or in the pipeline. Some of these articles will be based on working papers that have already been published. These outputs are perceived by WOTRO as an affirmation of the high quality of scientific results. Comparing the scientific results achieved by the eight transdisciplinary projects with the results of other research programmes is beyond the scope of this pilot study. It was also beyond the scope of this pilot study to conduct an analysis of the citation scores of the realised publications (see the bibliometric study of WOTRO funded research 2017-2015/6 by Ed Noyons, CWTS Leiden University).
A relevant outcome indicator would be the total number of publications that can be labelled interdisciplinary. This interdisciplinarity is either related to the type of journal in which the article was published, or to the composition of the group of authors. Leiden University CWTS conducted an extensive bibliometric study that also looked at the level of interdisciplinarity of WOTRO-funded research. While project leaders could refer to some, such an analysis was beyond the scope of this pilot study. However, for future evaluations it would be interesting to include this component in order to gain a more detailed picture of different aspects of the scientific outcomes of projects funded by WOTRO.

**Contributing to academic debate**

WOTRO’s ambition is not merely to support the production of high-quality scientific outputs. As the WOTRO Theory of Change shows, WOTRO aspires for these outputs to resonate with the international scientific community by stirring academic debates, proposing tested methodologies, introducing new concepts, or even contributing to new paradigms. The pilot study showed evidence for significant contributions to academic debates across the eight projects reviewed. Examples are: triggering of academic interest for traceability for small-scale fisheries; introduction of new concept of Conflict Sensitive Employment in debates on private sector development in fragile countries; introduction of the concept ‘extractive imperative’ in academic debates on natural resources and conflict; a new perspective that highlights the socio-cultural factors for low utilisation of lab tests as opposed to a purely technical take on this important health & development issue; new insights into the ‘interaction effects’ of different social protection instruments; introduction of new perspective on inclusive business models with a focus on value chains and small and medium-sized enterprises; and methodological insights on the relevance of continuous involvement of strategic stakeholders into action research. At this point, it is hard to say what the longer-term impact of these contributions will be in terms of durable changes in academic concepts, methods or paradigms.

**In conclusion**

**Findings**

- The cases reviewed provide evidence for significant contributions to academic debates, however, most projects have only recently been completed or are still in the final stages. Many journal articles, which are important for stirring academic debate, still await publishing.
- Consortia state that the input from non-academic partners strengthens the relevance of the scientific research, although there is also a trade-off because the multi-stakeholder collaboration almost inevitably takes away time from conducting rigorous scientific research and analysing findings.

**Challenges**

- The multi-stakeholder set-up of the consortia, can challenge the ambition to realise high-quality interdisciplinary knowledge. The internal dynamics of the consortium partnership influence the project as it requires consensus in determining the research question, the methodology and the preferred outputs.
- WOTRO’s focus on interdisciplinary and even transdisciplinary research almost inevitably means that more efforts need to be made by research consortia to get their findings published in top rated journals (which often still privilege monodisciplinary research).
- While academic partners appreciate the contributions by practitioner organisations in their consortia for strengthening the relevance of the scientific research, it limits space for theoretical research questions to be taken up by the projects.
- Short-term projects (up to 6 months) make an almost impossible demand on the time availability of WOTRO coordinators. More importantly it is questionable whether such projects fit within WOTRO’s mission to promote high-quality scientific knowledge, especially when standards for project eligibility are lowered from ‘excellent and very good’ to ‘good’.

**Recommendations**
In order to gain a more detailed picture of different aspects of the scientific outcomes of projects funded by WOTRO (levels of interdisciplinarity, citation scores, etc.) it would be interesting to include a bibliometric study in future evaluations of WOTRO programmes.

In order to ascertain the contributions made to new concepts and/or paradigm shifts, it may be necessary to review the scientific impact at programme or call level, in addition to looking at these outcomes at project level.

As academic conferences are important venues for promoting research findings, WOTRO might consider committing more budget for travel costs for researchers to present at international conferences.

WOTRO might also consider providing support for co-authoring of working papers and journal articles, when non-scientific partners are involved. Committing budget for write-shops might be an interesting option. This at the same time serves the purpose of capacity building among Southern partners, both junior academics/researchers and staff of practitioner organisations.

WOTRO (where relevant in collaboration with the KPs) should explore alternatives for satisfying the demands from policy-makers and practitioners for quicker, intermediate results, for instance by adjusting M&E cycles. Shortened research project timeframes may not be the only or best solution.
**New insights**

If new insights are gained in complex development issues that challenge or improve current development approaches (*outcome 7*), and these are aligned to (inter-) national agendas (*outcome 5*) and co-created by multi-stakeholder partnerships (*outcome 8*), this contributes to the use of such insights (*outcome 4*).

**WOTRO’s conditions & interventions**

In addition to promoting high-quality scientific knowledge, WOTRO also aspires that research projects contribute to the development of new insights into complex development issues. These new insights are meant to inspire, challenge or improve current development approaches in policy and/or practice. WOTRO assumes that if these insights are co-created with relevant stakeholders and aligned with the needs and interests of the intended users, this will increase the chances for research uptake.

In the calls for Proposals reviewed for this pilot study, WOTRO stipulates “generating new knowledge and insights” as one of the criteria for eligibility. Important to note is that WOTRO formulates this condition as the potential to generate new knowledge and insights, rather than assuming a priori that research will automatically lead to cutting-edge insights. Proposals are thus scored on the likelihood that the research will generate new insights. In the self-assessment reports, consortia are asked to elaborate on new insights gained by the project and their relevance for, and applicability to, the development issue at hand.

There are no interventions that WOTRO offers during the project period that are meant to contribute specifically to increasing the likelihood of gaining new insights or strengthening the quality of such insights. Encouraging the use of new insights is done by promoting engagement activities with a wide group of stakeholders as discussed above. Supporting interventions include the requirement of consortia to translate the gained insights into policy briefs, which some calls stipulate must be included as a product in their final self-assessment.

**Reflection on project level outcomes**

All projects were able to report on relevant new insights for policy and practice that they developed and gained throughout the course of the project. The type of new insights that were reported can be classified as: methodological insights, insights that inspire new practices or business strategies, insights that facilitate the marketing of new products, insights that may lead to agenda-setting for different policy decisions, insights that challenge assumptions of established development discourse, and insights that reveal the controversies and complexities of the local dynamics in developing countries.

**Examples of such insights are:**

- Shortage of skilled workers is a critical constraint for organisational performance of inclusive businesses. Strengthening vocational training institutes and business incubation centres can help to make significant headway towards addressing this issue. [RIDSSA, East Africa]
- Other than what is often assumed by policymakers, the research revealed only limited interaction effects between Cash Transfers and health insurance in Ghana. Implementation failures need to be tackled and coherence between Social Protection instruments improved. [RIDSSA, Ghana]
- The material, social-relational and subjective effects of Social Protection instruments are mutually reinforcing; potentially contributing to inclusive development. [RIDSSA, Ghana]
- The private sector does not necessarily contribute positively to peacebuilding or the rule of law. CIT companies were worse off in government-controlled areas than in Taliban-controlled areas. This insight goes against the assumption of the Call, which links private sector development to stabilization in a country. [SRoL, Afghanistan]
Companies will only adopt Conflict Sensitive Employment Frameworks (CSEFs) if these serve a business interest (e.g. enhanced security), not because it is a government requirement. Local realities will have to be the starting point for changes in employment strategies; this may imply that private sector development enhances the legitimacy of local leaders linked to the Taliban. [SRoL, Afghanistan]

Young men and women work hard towards economic independence, using the opportunities offered by NGOs when they can, by building on the researches, contacts and (self-)esteem that come with participating in such interventions. Turning to violence is not the typical response for young people. [SRoL, Burundi and South Sudan]

The non-economic aspects of interventions geared at harnessing young people’s economic agency, rather than the economic outcomes per se, might be crucial to the conflict impact. [SRoL, Burundi and South Sudan]

Traceability within small-scale fisheries is possible. This is an important insight because until recently traceability initiatives didn’t include small-scale fisheries because the obstacles (e.g. use of technology, geographical reach, investments) were considered hard to overcome. (Food & Business, Indonesia)

Scientific evidence proves millet flour is suitable for use as a weaning food; the millet-based composite flour makes a significant contribution to the recommended dietary allowance (RDA) for children aged 5-69 months and help to reduce malnutrition if adopted by mothers/caregivers. [F&B Research, Uganda]

Access to tests and test utilisation related to antenatal care are not just dependent on the technical capacities of the laboratories and their staff. Social and cultural factors play an important part. [GPHSR, Senegal]

Various well-funded donor programmes could be helpful for improving uptake of ANC tests (e.g. including ANC staff in trainings for HIV staff). However, funders and medical staff are not trained and not very willing to look for such synergies. There is thus a problem of fragmentation and competition within the health system. [GPHSR, Senegal]

‘Confrontational’ mechanisms, such as inviting rapporteurs, protest marches [[and voluntary mechanisms] are more effective to trigger a reaction among other stakeholders than ‘dialogue’ mechanisms, such as claiming government attention and round table dialogues. [CoCooN, Bolivia]

Most of these insights were delivered in the final reports. Policy and practice stakeholders have indicated they would benefit from earlier reporting on preliminary insights. However, some project leaders suggested that they did not feel confident to report on such intermediate insights. This points at the tricky balance between scientific standards and research aimed at delivering results for policy and practice.

New insights for outer circle stakeholders

The outcomes of the survey show that the projects performed very well in terms of generating relevant new insights. Over 90% of respondents (‘outer circle’ stakeholders) gained new information, insights and/or knowledge through their participation in events organised by the research consortia (see Figure 5). Most respondents stated that the event broadened their understanding of the topic at hand and/or complemented their existing knowledge. As many as 40% of the respondents answered that the event/s offered valuable new information, insights and/or knowledge.
**In conclusion**

**Findings**

- Because of the conditions set for alignment and multi-stakeholder partnership, projects are in a better position to work towards delivering insights that can be used by policy-makers and (public, NGO, private) practitioners.
- Different types of insights can be distinguished: methodological insights, insights that inspire new practices or business strategies, insights that facilitate the marketing of new products, insights that may lead to agenda-setting for different policy decisions, insights that challenge assumptions of established development discourse, and insights that reveal the controversies and complexities of the local dynamics in developing countries.
- The outcomes of the survey show that the projects performed very well in terms of generating relevant new insights for ‘outer circle’ stakeholders.

**Challenges**

- Policy and practice stakeholders would benefit from earlier reporting on preliminary insights. However, some project leaders suggested that they did not feel confident to report on such intermediate insights. This points at the tricky balance between scientific standards and research aimed at delivering results for policy and practice.

**Recommendations**

- WOTRO could use M&E structures to gain better insight into intermediate insights developed by the projects.
- Further recommendations relate to the use of new insights.
Use

If partnerships stimulate co-creation, and engagement with policy and practice is pursued, more alignment with agendas can be expected, high-quality interdisciplinary knowledge will be generated, as well as new insights in complex development issues. This combination of conditions will stimulate an enhanced use of high-quality research-based knowledge for development.

RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP / ENGAGEMENT WITH POLICY AND PRACTICE ➔
ALIGNMENT / HIGH-QUALITY INTERDISCIPLINARY KNOWLEDGE / NEW INSIGHTS ➔
USE

WOTRO’s conditions

In all the calls for Proposals reviewed for this pilot study, WOTRO clearly indicates that it expects research projects to work towards the use of their research findings (knowledge, insights, etc.). This applicability can be determined on the basis of three components:

‒ research finding/insights/recommendation are addressed/put on the agenda;
‒ improved/changed policies and practices;
‒ stakeholders who can demonstrate that new insights have contributed to improved practices, strategies and/or policy.

Consortia are expected to describe their ambitions in terms of research uptake or use of research findings in the impact pathway, where a logical flow from activities, to outputs, to outcomes and finally impact should be described for each project. This can be complemented by requested knowledge management strategies or communication plans, that force the consortia to contemplate the process that is required to get them from A (research activity) to Z (research uptake), and possibly back to A again.

In self-assessment reports (mid-term and final), consortia are requested to report on the impact pathway, and thus on the progress achieved against the indicators for research uptake by different stakeholders. When it becomes clear from the final review reports that projects have not performed as anticipated in relation to the indicators set in the impact pathway, the only procedure that this study encountered that is in place to penalise consortia for this failure, is to withhold the last 15% of the awarded budget. We have not come across a case where this measure was taken. This is connected to the fact that WOTRO has no structure in place after projects have been finalised to assess to what extent Impact Pathway goals have been sufficiently pursued and whether research findings have been taken up by (un)intended stakeholders. We were told of one instance (not included in the eight cases reviewed here) in which WOTRO decided to organise an unplanned field visit to gain first-hand insight into project progress and difficulties as the communication with the project coordinator was not unsatisfactory.

Reflection on project level outcomes

Timing of and motivations for research uptake

Project leaders from all projects reviewed, emphasised that achieving tangible outcomes in terms of research uptake takes time. It seemed unrealistic, according to the project leaders, to expect such changes to take place within the limited timeframe of the research project. Project duration of the eight cases ranged from 6 months (shortest) up to 36 months (longest). Changing political or economic conditions in the countries where research is conducted in some cases also reduced opportunities for research uptake; these are conditions that projects have no influence on. In addition, the pilot study also shows that it is often still too early at the closure of a project to give a clear indication of the results in terms of research uptake – other than expectations or anecdotal evidence. It is therefore perhaps no surprise that WOTRO struggles most with grasping the results at the level of ‘use’ or ‘research uptake’.

The question was also raised whether one single research project can be expected to have ground-
breaking impact on local, national or international policy, even if the findings are recognised and validated by stakeholders. Some project leaders emphasised that it would perhaps even be ‘unwise’ to expect government officials and decision-makers to base policy changes on the outcomes of one research project only.

Some projects found that research findings were being used by the intended stakeholders, however, with a different motivation than the project had anticipated (e.g. GPS tracking devices used by small-scale fishers to be safe at sea, rather than from the viewpoint of seafood traceability; CSEFs used by companies in Afghanistan not because it contributes to peacebuilding but because it reduces operational costs).

Project cycle tensions

Several project leaders pointed at a tension between the ambitions of their research projects in terms of ensuring outcomes are being used, and the reality of the project cycle. Alignment and relevance may be ensured through engagement activities during the project period, however, they state, a vital task is waiting once the final research outcomes have been validated. To promote the use of these research outcomes, engagement activities with targeted policy makers or practitioner organisations should continue or even be stepped up, however, by this time the project has usually come to an end. This means there is no time nor budget left to focus on this last important phase of engagement that is to increase the chances of uptake and use. (project leaders also often busy with writing journal articles after project closure).

Examples of use of research findings

Despite these limitations, the case study reports (chapter 2) show that the projects have been able to achieve different and sometimes significant levels of research uptake and use across different types of stakeholders, depending on who their target groups were. In certain cases, research recommendations were put on local or national agendas, in other cases the research findings led to improved practices or business strategies by practitioners (NGO, public or private), or were taken up in the theories of change of different actors (NGO or governmental). A selection of the results in terms of research uptake or use per intended stakeholder, taken from the eight projects reviewed, is presented below:

Use by governments:

- Community-based monitoring of environmental impacts by the extractive industries has led to the Ministry of Environment declaring environmental emergency. [CoCooN, Bolivia]
- The Ugandan Minister of State for Relief and Disaster Preparedness has committed to sign a supplying contract for the product, which will thus also reach to camps for refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs) in the border regions. [Food & Business, Uganda]
- Data generated by the Technology-based Traceability apps developed by the project feeds into provincial and national government information systems and is for instance being used for development of a national Harvest Strategy for Tuna. [Food & Business, Indonesia]
- The Directorate of Laboratories and the Directorate of Reproductive Health in Senegal started a dialogue on how to increase the uptake of ANC testing and how to achieve a more coherence between the different units. [GPHSR, Senegal]
- Embassies have shown willingness to adopt research findings in agenda-setting. [RIDSSA, East Africa]
- The Dutch MFA showed great interest in the project findings and has taken them on board in the development of its Theory of Change for Employment for Stability. [SRoL, Afghanistan and South Sudan/Burundi]

Use by practitioners (for profit, not for profit, communities):

- The context-specific Conflict-sensitive employment (CSE) Framework that was developed with and for CIT companies, has been integrated by 5 companies into their operations. [SRoL, Afghanistan]
The 4 TBTs that were developed by the project, have been taken up and are being used throughout the supply chain for Fair Trade certified tuna: small-scale fishers use SpotTrace GPS-based technology; suppliers use IFish app; enumerators use DOCK app; processors use open source Tally-O. [Food&Business, Indonesia]

Fishers use traceability data to make better business and fishing trip decisions; because of capacity building efforts by the project they are moreover in a better position to negotiate their prices. [Food&Business, Indonesia]

Production of a certified (with highest Ugandan quality mark), affordable product that helps to reduce malnutrition among children has been marketed and scaled (production increased by a factor 7). Market testing has accelerated beyond Uganda, and is taking place in Rwanda, Kenya and southern Sudan. Food & Business, Uganda.

Philips and Safaricom have promoted the research findings and Netherlands Africa Business Council (NABC) adopted lessons learned for strategic planning. [RIDDSSA, East Africa]

Community-based monitoring of environmental impacts by the extractive industries has led to local community filing charges against multinational extraction company; information used in dialogue with multinational and policy-makers. [CoCooN, Bolivia]

Use in scientific / academic community:

- The project developed an innovative analytical framework linking social protection to multiple dimensions of inclusive development, instead of only to poverty reduction/growth. [RIDDSSA, Ghana and Kenya]

- Approaches to ‘inclusive business models’ have been adopted in curricula at an African training institute (ESAMI) and at the Partnership Resource Centre masters course at Erasmus University. [RIDDSSA, East Africa]

- A concept ‘extractive imperative’ was introduced and adopted in academic debates. [CoCooN]

- The project can claim a pioneering role academically for looking at a diversity of factors contributing to test utilisation. This has become an important topic in international discussions (related to HIV rather than maternal health). [GHPHSR, Senegal]

Use of research results by outer circle stakeholders

- The survey conducted among project stakeholders also sheds an interesting light on the projects’ research uptake outcomes (see Figure 6). Over 50% of the survey respondents stated that through engagement with the research project they were inspired to change their professional approach to the topic that was addressed. A little under 40% of the respondents answered that the event broadened their understanding of the topic but did not lead to any concrete changes in their approaches to the topic.

Use

Did you make use of the new information, insights and/or knowledge in your current work (practice and/or policy)?

![Figure 3: Survey responses - using new insights (1/2)](image-url)
Of the over 50% of respondents that responded positively to using the research project findings, more than 55% indicated that they or their organisation used the information, insights and/or knowledge to change or improve certain practices (see Figure 7). More than 35% stated that they have explicitly referred to the information, insights and/or knowledge in policy document(s); and 26% answered they now talk about the topic differently in discussions with other stakeholders or colleagues. 12% answered they did not use the information in any way.

**Figure 4:** Survey responses – using new insights (2 / 2)

In conclusion

*Findings*

- Achieving tangible outcomes in terms of research uptake takes time and can often not be established until after a project has ended. This is especially the case in volatile country contexts.
- The eight projects have all achieved, sometimes significant, levels of research uptake and use across different types of stakeholders. In certain cases, research recommendations were put on local or national agendas, in other cases the research findings led to improved practices or business strategies by practitioners (NGO, public or private), or were taken up in the theories of change of different actors (NGO or governmental).
- Over 50% of the survey respondents state that through engagement with the research project they were inspired to change their professional approach to the topic that was addressed. Of these respondents, more than 55% in turn indicates that they or their organisation used the information, insights and/or knowledge to change or improve certain practices.

*Challenges*

- Several project leaders pointed at a tension between the ambitions of their research projects in terms of ensuring outcomes are being used, and the reality of the project cycle. After the formal closure of the project, there is no time nor budget left to focus on the last important phase of engagement that is to increase the chances of uptake and use of ultimate findings.
- WOTRO has no structure in place after projects have been finalised to assess to what extent Impact Pathway goals have been sufficiently pursued and whether research findings have been taken up by (un)intended stakeholders.

*Recommendations*

- Using the impact pathway more in the final assessment of the project, will help WOTRO to get a more in-depth picture of the results at ‘use’ level of projects. In certain programmes, the ‘outcomes’ and ‘impacts’ were described as ‘horizon’ goals, rather than achievable ambitions; leaving limited room for WOTRO to possibly reprimand projects that have steered away too much from their initial and approved intentions for impact.
- Increased synergy and connection with other research projects at call level is required to realise WOTRO’s ambition to strengthen the outcomes of the research programmes for improvements at policy level and changes towards impact.
- To promote the use of research outcomes, it is important that active engagement with targeted stakeholders does not stop when the project ends. It is recommended that WOTRO and the KPs together think of ways to overcome this, for instance by providing follow-up grants for targeted outreach activities.
Annex 7: Recommendations per assumption

The recommendations per assumption are as follows:

**Research Partnerships**
- Allow consortia to come together face-to-face before implementation.
- Use a review - on the downsides and obstacles experienced as well as the solutions and best practices when working together with different knowledge actors in multi- stakeholder consortia - as input for training/exchange sessions with new consortia at the start of their projects.
- Provide dedicated support to consortia in developing an Impact Pathway at the start of the research projects.

**Engagement with policy & practice**
- Organise a kick-off workshop that engages the ‘outer circle’.
- Knowing which stakeholders should be targeted and how is a challenge for many projects. Providing training on stakeholder analysis and mapping (AIIM) to research consortia is therefore recommended.
- It is recommended that WOTRO makes it very clear in the calls for Proposals what exactly is expected of the research consortia in terms of knowledge sharing and engagement activities and commitments. This requirement should be put on paper explicating what the roles and expectations are of both WOTRO and the KPs. At the same time, WOTRO and the KPs should review whether their expectations are feasible for different kinds of projects, and explore ways to improve their collaboration also for the benefit of streamlining (reporting) requests to the consortia.

**Alignment with agendas**
- Only a few structures are in place for WOTRO to ensure that alignment is substantiated during the research process. It is recommended that WOTRO makes better use of the mandatory IPs formulated by the consortia, as a tool to monitor progress throughout the project period, and to provide support to consortia to ensure they do not lose sight of their initial ambitions in terms of relevance and impact.

**High-quality interdisciplinary knowledge**
- In order to gain a more detailed picture of different aspects of the scientific outcomes of projects funded by WOTRO (levels of interdisciplinarity, citation scores, etc.) it would be interesting to include a bibliometric study in future evaluations of WOTRO programmes.
- In order to ascertain the contributions made to new concepts and/or paradigm shifts, it may be necessary to review the scientific impact at programme or call level, in addition to looking at these outcomes at project level.
- As academic conferences are important venues for promoting research findings, WOTRO might consider committing more budget for travel costs for researchers to present at international conferences.
- WOTRO might also consider providing support for co-authoring of working papers and journal articles, when non-scientific partners are involved. Committing budget for write-shops might be an interesting option. This at the same time serves the purpose of capacity building among Southern partners, both junior academics/researchers and staff of practitioner organisations.
- WOTRO (where relevant in collaboration with the KPs) should explore alternatives for satisfying the demands from policy-makers and practitioners for quicker, intermediate results, for instance by adjusting M&E cycles. Shortened research project timeframes may not be the only or best solution.

**New insights**
- WOTRO could use M&E structures to gain better insight into intermediate insights developed by the projects.
- Further recommendations relate to the use of new insights.
**Use**

- Using the impact pathway more in the final assessment of the project, will help WOTRO to get a more in-depth picture of the results at 'use' level of projects.
- In certain programmes, the 'outcomes' and 'impacts' were described as 'horizon' goals, rather than achievable ambitions; leaving limited room for WOTRO to possibly reprimand projects that have steered away too much from their initial and approved intentions for impact.
Annex 8: Recommendations per stage

**Programme design and tendering procedure**

- to include WOTRO as fund manager also in the thematic decision-making stages as advisory member. This will ensure that new programmes build on the long-term experience of WOTRO in designing and managing Research for Development programmes.

- to organise a Theory of Change workshop prior to the formulation of the call for Proposals in order to thoroughly discuss and compare assumptions and expectations of the programme; workshop should at least include the relevant department head of MFA, member of the Knowledge Platform secretariat and the WOTRO coordinator and possibly also a IAC member.

- to ensure relevant LMIC stakeholders are involved in determining, or minimally providing feedback on, the decision-making process about the thematic focus of the calls.

- to use the enabling criteria as guideline for designing new programmes to ensure consistency in within and between calls and the possibility for structured procedures.

- to ensure that the project requirements (e.g. for stakeholder engagement and knowledge sharing) and the associated budgets are aligned.

- to include in the requirements for project proposals the explicit expectation that intermediate results of the research will be shared.

- to design programmes in such a way that structural support to research consortia for meeting the (new) Research for Development criteria can be provided – this implies that sufficient funding for knowledge management should be available at project as well as programme level.

**Programme management and interventions**

- WOTRO should focus on what has been its strength all along, that is, managing the research projects implemented by the consortia. This includes, by means of a robust monitoring and evaluation structure, ensuring that consortia share intermediate results (with the inner circle). Clear agreements for collaboration should be in place to ensure that these results can be used by the KPs who are responsible for sharing these with outer circle stakeholders.

- to ensure that projects are awarded dedicated capacity - both in fte and associated budgets – to be able to include a programme manager with the relevant qualities for this challenging task.

**Monitoring & evaluation**

- to allow intermediate results sharing to take place, stronger Monitoring and Evaluation structures should be set up, in order to ensure that long-term projects have short-term cycles of monitoring. This should be made clear from the start (in the calls) so that consortia applying for the research funds are fully aware of the responsibilities and expectations they will be taking on.

- to ensure synergy and opportunities for higher-level use of research outcomes, WOTRO should encourage research projects to not only work towards addressing their own research questions, but also make clear how their outcomes are relevant to programme/Call level goals. This can be stimulated by organising programme-level interventions such as country or regional meetings and annual meetings.