



Think Tank Initiative's Policy Engagement and Communications Program

THE THINK TANK INITIATIVE

Think tanks in the developing world effect change in their societies, strengthen public policy debates and promote more objective, evidence-based decision-making to help improve the lives of their fellow citizens. The Think Tank Initiative (TTI) is a multi-donor program dedicated to strengthening these institutions in developing countries by improving their ability to develop research that both informs and influences policy. Currently, 48 institutions are supported in 22 countries.

POLICY ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS (PEC) PROGRAM

TTI's **Policy Engagement and Communications (PEC) Program** was launched to assist TTI-funded institutions in cultivating, synthesizing and disseminating research in ways that will heighten their policy voice and impact. The program aims to strengthen think tanks' policy engagement and communications capacity by providing think tanks with customized capacity development through ongoing mentorship support and opportunities for peer learning. There will also be an emphasis placed on measuring the results of program to allow for continuous learning and improvements. Lastly, a structure will also be created for continued learning after the completion of the project.

Policy engagement

To have meaningful impact, think tanks need to be able to engage decision-makers by developing an understanding of, and taking part in, the policy-making process. The strength of an institution's relationships and its ability to network are often vital to its success. This may include building and nurturing relationships with a range of stakeholders, from policymakers to media, and from donors to the average citizen.

Communications

It is critical to engage effectively with all stakeholders and communicate well with diverse audiences. Specifically, think tanks should be able to continuously review and improve the way in which they synthesize, package and disseminate their information and engage in policy dialogue. Today, many think tanks are further developing their in-house capacity for communications, advocacy and outreach and some are also using social media to establish and maintain their networks.

Policy Engagement and Communications Program OBJECTIVES

- **Develop a better understanding of policy processes in specific contexts**
- **Engage in knowledge brokering to ensure evidence is credible and practically useful and key networkers are identified and leveraged**
- **Contribute to the public debate by involving and reaching out to different policy actors**
- **Synthesize and package knowledge and evidence by translating research results to different audiences in accessible and intelligible terms**

PEC IN ANGLOPHONE AFRICA

The Results for Development Institute (R4D) will be serving as the PEC Regional Coordinating Lead for Anglophone Africa, supported by CommsConsult, David Olson, Raymond Struyk and a team of experienced mentors. Capacity building and support will be provided to TTI-funded think tanks in Anglophone Africa, with the following activities undertaken to support the four PEC program objectives:

Months 1-3	Months 4-9	Months 10-12
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regional inception meeting with think tanks and mentors to kick off the program• A diagnostic needs assessment exercise will be completed to understand work- to-date milestones, regional and/or thematic challenges, and potential communication support needs. Targeted work-plans will be developed for each think tank• Personalized mentor training sessions will begin	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mentors to work with think tanks and TTI to identify areas of improvement and provide customized training, technical support, and encourage peer learning between regional organizations• Regional workshops convened where common challenges across regions to be shared, and peer-to-peer learning will be supported• Online learning platform to be developed to further facilitate networking and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mentors continue to provide customized training and technical support• Final review meeting to capture program learning

About the Results for Development Institute

Results for Development Institute (R4D) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to unlock solutions to tough development challenges that prevent people in low- and middle-income countries from realizing their full potential. With a network of experts and local partners throughout the world, R4D provides policy analysis, critical information, decision-making tools, and policy advice to governments, civil society organizations, and international funders in order to stimulate positive change. R4D has collaborated with over 80 policy institutes, think tanks, consulting groups, and academic organizations across over 40 countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

About the Think Tank Initiative

The Think Tank Initiative is a multi-donor program dedicated to strengthening the capacity of independent policy research organizations in the developing world. Launched in 2008 and managed by Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the Initiative is a partnership between IDRC, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) and the Netherlands Directorate- General for International Cooperation (DGIS).



To learn more about R4D's role, please contact Shubha Jayaram at sjayaram@resultsfordevelopment.org or +1 (202) 640-4857.