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Bridging text with context: knowledge translation in the Global South

Primary research report

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All research outputs associated with this research project can be accessed on the [IDS project page](#).



Acronyms

CIHR	Canadian Institutes of Health Research
CIPPEC	Center for the Implementation of Public Policies for Equity and Growth
CLARE	Climate Adaptation and Resilience Initiative
DGSE	General Directorate for Monitoring and Evaluation
EIDM	Evidence-informed decision-making
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
KII	Key informant interview
KT	Knowledge translation
MEL	Monitoring, evaluation, and learning
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NCD	Non-communicable diseases
PRICELESS	Priority Cost-Effective Lessons for System Strengthening South Africa
SIAS	Southasia Institute of Advanced Studies
TCI	The Conversation Indonesia



Executive summary

The Knowledge Translation in the Global South project, funded by IDRC and undertaken by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) and OTT Consulting, seeks to identify similarities and differences in knowledge translation (KT) strategies and practices used by Southern researchers across different disciplines and investigate the challenges they face. It ultimately aims to recommend support mechanisms and procurement innovations to donors seeking to create an enabling environment for Southern-led research for development.

This research report, compiled by OTT Consulting, presents empirical findings on the challenges faced by researchers in the Global South when it comes to knowledge translation. Our research methods included a pulse survey, key informant interviews, and case studies. Based on these, we have built a comprehensive picture of how knowledge translation is understood in the Global South, identified missing components in knowledge systems and processes, highlighted challenges, and enablers of knowledge translation, and reflected on how funders can better support knowledge translation to make the working process more inclusive. Notably, our research has emphasised the crucial role that context plays in understanding the challenges faced by Southern KT practitioners.

Our key findings

Our findings shed light on the complexity of KT in the Global South. While the ultimate goal of KT is to bring evidence closer to its users, its impact can vary widely depending on context, and our findings suggest a need to move away from notions of ‘Southern exceptionalism’. Our research shows that KT practitioners in the Global South may have multiple roles and must navigate a range of challenges, but, we suggest, they have access to the same skills, tools, and channels, and it is their *operational context* that makes the difference. Highlights of our findings are listed below.

- **Knowledge translation is broadly understood by researchers and practitioners in the Global South.**
- **As a consequence, knowledge translation cannot be cleanly separated from other activities involved in efforts to promote the use of evidence.**
- **Knowledge translation practitioners cannot always be identified as different to others performing different roles.**
- **Knowledge translation practice and tools are widely available across the world.**
- **The main factors affecting KT practice in the Global South refer to the particular nature of the contexts in which KT practitioners, broadly understood, operate.**



These contextual factors also influence the roles that different stakeholders are able to play in any effort to generate, communicate and, ultimately, use evidence. As a consequence, various sections of society are still excluded from KT processes. Context also defines what counts as success.

These findings are important because they steer us away from the narrowly defined supply-side, demand-side, or intermediary interventions and instead point towards the importance of systemic interventions.

Implications

To improve knowledge translation practices, we recommend funders consider:

- Adopting a broader and more nuanced understanding of knowledge translation that pays greater attention to its function or purpose (i.e., to facilitate the use of evidence) than to narrowly defined activities or roles.
- Actively supporting the global exchange of skills and experiences. It continues to be important to critically document the rich field of knowledge translation practice, continuously invest in strengthening skills and competencies and facilitate direct engagement between KT practitioners.
- Relying on partners' and researchers' own assessments of their contexts to determine how best to incorporate the knowledge translation function and purpose into their work.
- To encourage grantees to be innovative in their KT process, donors should increase their risk tolerance and shift away from focusing solely on successful outcomes.
- Encouraging grantees to experiment and test innovative approaches that can foster innovation and help grantees step out of their comfort zones.
- Actively considering the impact that the wider system will have and how to address it when designing or deciding to support knowledge translation efforts - even if these are narrowly defined as demand, supply or intermediary-led.
- Playing a more active role in promoting greater inclusivity in KT functions. At the same time, funders can carefully intervene by, for example, supporting organisations that more effectively represent the needs of marginalised communities and populations.
- Investing in the study of KT as a part of other fields – and not only as a field on its own.

The future of KT in the Global South

A series of Think Pieces on the future of KT in the Global South was also commissioned to supplement our research. These authors, too, underscored the importance of context



for supporting KT, as well as demonstrating how KT practices fit within wider evidence ecosystems.

Our research provides fundamental insights into the understanding, processes, desired outcomes, and challenges in doing knowledge translation in the Global South. It demonstrates the nuance, complexity and diversity of Southern KT and identifies spaces where funders can make a difference by providing practitioners with resources to enable context-driven, impactful KT.



1. Introduction and methodology

This report is a deliverable of the Knowledge Translation in the Global South research project. It presents the main findings of the primary research undertaken through a pulse survey, key informant interviews, case studies developed from interviews with IDRC programme officers as well as the protagonists of the interventions, case studies and desk research on further knowledge translation (KT) examples. The full list of participants is presented further below in the Annex. This document also includes a link to six Think Pieces from KT practitioners, mostly from the Global South, who add insight into the findings. The report concludes with recommendations for improved practice in delivering and supporting KT in the Global South.

As part of the Knowledge Translation in the Global South research project, IDS conducted a literature review on KT. An early version of the literature review informed the design of this study.

1.1 Research objectives

The overall objectives of this primary research were to:

- Document the experience of actors involved in the KT process.
- Capture diverse viewpoints and - in doing so - squarely address issues of power and politics in the field of KT and the funding of KT.
- Broaden the cases and experiences studied beyond the “usual suspects” (i.e., organisations and projects currently supported by IDRC and other research funders or that have been widely documented), offering a space to challenge established KT theories and dominant practices.
- Understand KT in practice so that relevant and sustainable KT practices can be funded in a timely and strategic way.
- Reflect on the applicability and relevance of the KT modes framework for future use.

1.2 Research questions

The questions guiding this report were co-developed through a series of learning events facilitated by the Institute for Development Studies (IDS) and OTT. IDS conducted six learning events between January and June 2022. These sessions involved members of the research team at IDS and OTT, colleagues from IDRC and steering group members.



The sessions were further informed by discussions with steering group members facilitated by OTT.

Table 1. Main and sub-research questions

Main question	Sub questions
How is KT understood across the Global South?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Knowledge: How are <u>knowledge and evidence</u> understood by the different actors/stakeholders engaged in the KT processes, and how have these understandings emerged?• Translation: What does <u>KT refer</u> to in the contexts (geographies, sectors) studied? Are there differences in how different actors (practitioners, funders) approach KT?• People and organisations: <u>Who</u> participates (and who is excluded) in KT processes, and what roles do they play?
What factors influence KT processes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enablers: What are the key characteristics (governance, resources, institutional arrangements etc.) of successful KT processes?• Barriers: What are the challenges to KT practice and desired KT outcomes?• COVID-19: How has the pandemic (esp. conspiracy theories) and recent developments in communications technologies affected KT practice?
How can funders and other stakeholders facilitate and support an enabling environment for inclusive and effective KT processes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Equity: What kind of institutional arrangements (e.g., research institutions, intermediaries, and research-policy-partnerships) facilitate more equitable KT processes?• Effectiveness: What kind of institutional arrangements (e.g., research institutions, intermediaries and research-policy-partnerships) facilitate more effective KT processes? Are more equitable arrangements more effective?



- Support to the enabling environment: How can funders support an inclusive and enabling environment to support effective KT processes?
- Support to individual actors: What types of support do researchers, research intermediaries and research users in the Global South desire from research funders?

1.3 Definitions

Throughout the study, we found that the literature (Combaz, Connor and Georgalakis 2023), our key informants, members of the team and the authors of the Think Pieces often used the same labels to refer to slightly different concepts. Some key terms, such as evidence-use and evidence-informed decision-making (EIDM), were used interchangeably and are not conceptually distinct. The following definitions are the most commonly used throughout this report.

Audience: By audience, we refer to the main stakeholders and users to which knowledge and evidence are delivered. Audiences are the key users, the primary target identified intentionally by the practitioners who are assumed to be interested in the evidence provided.

Evidence: In a broad sense, evidence is “an argument or assertion backed by information” (Goldman and Pabari 2021, 15). In this research, evidence predominantly refers to research-based information, data and insight produced by a range of actors and is not limited to formal or formally produced forms of knowledge.

Evidence use: Is a process that incorporates “a range of types of evidence, inclusive of research, and constituting varied forms and purposes as ‘use’, such as the categories of instrumental, conceptual, political/strategic, and symbolic” (Farley-Ripple, Oliver, and Boaz 2020, 2).

Global South: The definition of the Global South was the subject of a lengthy discussion. It broadly refers to the regions of Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Oceania. Yet the terminology suggests more than a geographical categorisation. It “references an entire history of colonialism, neo-imperialism, and differential economic and social change through which large inequalities in living standards, life expectancy, and access to resources are maintained” (Dados and Connell 2012).

Intermediaries: While we do not subscribe to the view that producers and users of knowledge belong to exclusive groups, this definition is useful: actors who “enable the



suppliers of knowledge to interact iteratively with the users of new knowledge” (Jones, Datta, and Jones 2009, 30).

Knowledge: Loosely taken from a conference on KT: “explicit (factual) information or tacit understandings that can be used” (Shaxson and Bilak, 2012). We use ‘knowledge’ in a broad sense, encompassing different types of knowledge (research-based, project-programme knowledge, participatory knowledge (Jones, Datta, and Jones 2009, 7)) but also more informally generated forms produced outside of established institutions, such as traditional and local knowledge.

Knowledge brokering: “A two-way exchange of knowledge about an issue, which fosters collective learning and usually involves knowledge brokers or intermediaries” (Shaxson and Bielak 2012).

Knowledge enablers: In the institutional context of a knowledge system are “Regulatory authorities and public and private funding bodies” (Hertz et al. 2020).

Knowledge producers: In the context of knowledge translation and this research, they are defined as suppliers of evidence, primarily based on research-based knowledge, as mentioned above. They may be based in or affiliated with – but not limited to - formal organisations or working individually in its generation.

Knowledge translation: The working definition of knowledge translation in this research is “intentional interventions involving dialogue between a range of relevant actors to encourage or support the use of research-based evidence to inform behaviours”¹. Other definitions of KT refer to “the process of translating knowledge from one format to another to allow the receiver to understand it, often from specialists to non-specialists” (Shaxson and Bielak, 2012, 2)

Knowledge system: A “set of knowledge institutions and actors and delineates the interconnections between them” (Hertz et al. 2020, 2). A similar term, *evidence-system*, denotes the same idea of a system that produces and distributes evidence to ease its use among the relevant institutions and actors.

1.4 Methodology

The primary research consisted mainly of qualitative data collection methods. We employed the following tools between August and December 2022 to collect primary data:

- A pulse survey
- Key informant interviews

¹ Internal primary research plan, 2022.



- Case studies
- Think Pieces
- A sensemaking session

Consultative meetings with the project's Steering Group and regular Learning Journey sessions were not part of the data collection per se; however, they contributed to the triangulation of findings. Think Pieces were written by voluntary contributors whose insights also contributed to the analysis, and thus triangulation of findings by adding original views about the future of KT.

Throughout the project, we have sought to assign authorship of the ideas, cases and examples presented to the protagonists. To that end, we have sought approval from our key informants and participants in the Learning Journey sessions, the Steering Group, and Think Pieces to mention them by name.

Pulse survey

This short survey aimed to gain preliminary insights into funders' perceptions of the challenges in knowledge translation in the Global South. The research team sent out a survey to IDRC programme officers and extended it to representatives of donor organisations within OTT and IDRC's network. The survey was sent out in three languages (English, French and Spanish) between 29 June and 21 August 2022. We received ten responses, all in English, from six different institutions working in the research and development field.

Key informant interviews

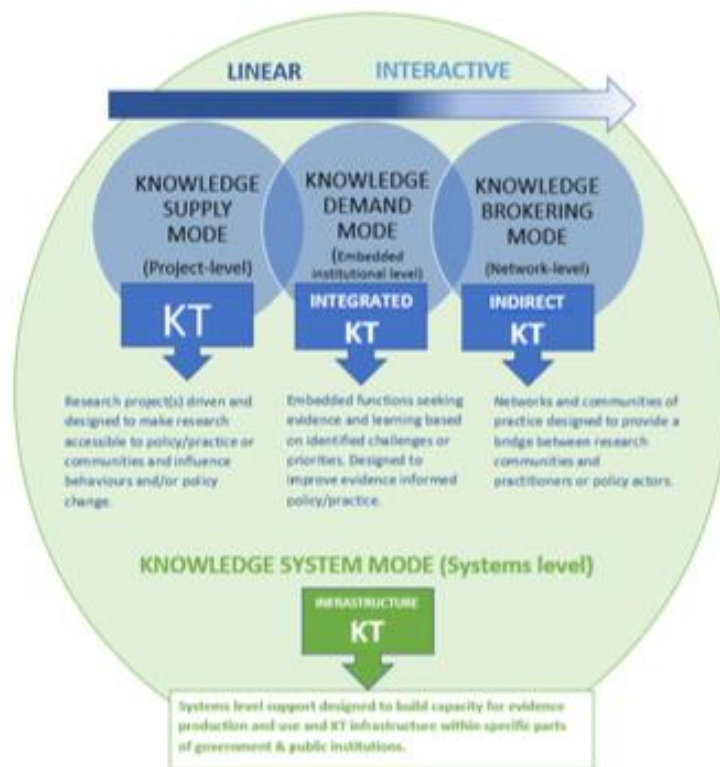
Key informant interviews were the primary data source for this research. We conducted 21 interviews with informants we classified as practitioners, experts and funders. We defined practitioners as anyone working in the field of knowledge translation and its wider environment. Experts were understood as individuals doing academic research on KT as a subject and individuals who have shown vast experience working in the field. Meanwhile, funders were individuals who work in donor institutions with relevance to the field of KT. We based the selection of informants on the following criteria:

- Sectoral representation to avoid the overrepresentation of one field. We particularly wanted to avoid the overrepresentation of experts from the health field, which the literature review found to be disproportionately prevalent in the literature.
- Regional representation to reflect possible differences between research traditions, languages and post-colonial experiences.
- Gender balance.
- Representative of KT modes, which informed the initial search for cases.



The modes are part of a framework that builds on the idea of KT being shaped by a supply and demand mechanism. Mode 1 represents supply-shaped KT, Mode 2 is more demand-driven, whereas Mode 3 is based on intermediary and linkages activities. Mode 4 is systems-based.

Figure 1. Four modes of KT. Source: Georgalakis, 2022



All interviews were conducted virtually in a semi-structured manner. The final interview protocol used by the research team is provided in the Annex. Participants for the KII were sampled through both purposive and snowball sampling.



Table 2. Overview of key informants

Region	Male	Female	Total
Global North	3	2	5
Africa	4	3	7
Americas	-	4	4
Asia	2	2	4
MENA	-	1	1
Total	9	12	21

A full list of the undisclosed informants is provided in the Annex.

Case studies

While the interviews were guided by a protocol informed by the main research questions, we chose to go about case study selection more carefully. Context matters, and we believe this should inform our thinking in scrutinising the many possible examples we chose. We recognise how other frameworks are starting to incorporate micro-level, practice-informed factors into the analysis of successful cases of evidence use, such as the Context Matters Framework (Langer and Weyrauch 2021).

The case studies were thus chosen to allow a deep dive into KT activities and an analysis of their implementation as well as the context in which they were delivered. The findings from the pulse survey and the KIIs informed a major underpinning premise of our suggested approach. Briefly, these findings suggested that KT actors are eager to circumvent conventional communication channels and/or political, economic, and social structures to directly engage with their audience(s) and deliver a discernible impact. This involves paying greater attention to their intended audiences as the driving factor in their choice of strategy, channels, and tools (Bennett & Jessani, 2011:49).

Our approach for selecting cases offered an opportunity to capture how KT actors overcome empirical challenges by looking at three dimensions: the main stakeholders or audience, KT intervention modes, and types of knowledge. Based on this selection framework, we chose six case studies, as presented in the table below and eight additional shorter profiles or snapshots.



Table 3. Overview of case studies

No	Case	Stakeholder	KT Mode	Country/ region
1	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 6th Assessment Report	IPCC and policymakers on various levels	Brokering Mode 3 and capacity building (System level) Mode 4	Africa (regional)
2	Tax on Sugary Beverages in South Africa	Policymakers	Demand-driven Mode 2	South Africa
3	Evidencia Midis	Policymakers	Demand-driven Mode 2	Peru
4	<i>Más Días para Cuidar</i> - CIPPEC	General public and policymakers	Supply-led Mode 1	Argentina
5	Evidence Tori Dey	Community	Supply-led Mode 1 and Brokering Mode 3	Cameroon
6	Vaaka Media - In the Field Podcast	Development workers and lay audience	Brokering Mode 3 and capacity building (System level) Mode 4	India



Think Pieces

To explore and offer a space for emerging ideas in the field of KT, we commissioned a series of Think Pieces authored by KT practitioners worldwide. The preliminary findings from the key informant interviews and case studies informed the choice of authors and the questions we posed to them. These Pieces are linked to in the Annex of this report and have been published by On Think Tanks. The Think Pieces also encouraged a broader discussion on a field that, as this report suggests, is in constant change. [Read think piece series.](#)

Sensemaking session

A meet-up at the end of the data collection was organised to share early findings and harvest feedback from research participants. The session was held virtually on 2 November 2022 and was attended by six informants – out of 21 invitees – who participated in this research.

Consultative meetings

The OTT research team joined several Learning Journey sessions and discussions with members of the Steering Group. These offered suggestions on relevant literature, key informants to contact, cases to consult, and the opportunity to reflect on emerging findings.

Learning Journey meetings

The Learning Journey meetings refined the conceptual framework (fig 1.) and research questions, identified research participants, and shared and discussed initial findings to identify the most relevant evidence of what works and for whom (or what doesn't) in particular contexts.

Steering group meetings

The Steering Group's role was to help inform the investigation. The Steering Group's responsibilities included participating in learning events, providing intelligence on potential audiences and research users, sharing learning from the study across their networks, reviewing research objectives, scope and methodologies, highlighting specific issues relating to engaging research with policy and practice in a Southern context, reviewing draft reports and ad-hoc engagement between the Chair and project Principal Investigator for advice and guidance.



2. Research findings

This section presents the findings from our primary research. We reflect on how KT is understood, who is included and excluded from KT processes, how we measure it and the challenges, enablers and role of funding related to knowledge translation in the Global South.

The study aims to better understand the contextual setting of the findings and make recommendations based on the level of intervention required. The three levels help distinguish the findings' contextual setting and offer relevant and actionable recommendations.

2.1 How knowledge translation is understood

Our research suggests that we cannot narrow down “knowledge translation” to a single label and definition and that perhaps more important is the underlying conceptual and functional understanding of KT.

The term "knowledge translation" is widely used in the Canadian health sector (Straus, Tetroe, and Graham 2009). The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) defines it as ‘a dynamic and iterative process that includes synthesis, dissemination, exchange and ethically sound application of knowledge’ (Jones, Datta, and Jones 2009, 29). Both this definition and the label are used in the international development sector, and, according to interviewees, are well-known in the field. On the other hand, IDRC defines KT as ‘...the process of moving research-generated evidence into action with a view to having a positive impact on addressing development challenges.’ (Bennett & Jessani, 2011)

This project used a working definition for KT closer to the CIHR’s recognition of a dynamic and iterative process: ‘Intentional interventions involving dialogue between relevant actors to encourage or support the use of research-based evidence to inform behaviours (including decisions, practice or policies)’. We used ‘dialogue’ instead of ‘engagement’ as we felt it allowed more straightforward translation into other languages where the term ‘engagement’ may be too broadly interpreted (e.g., Spanish).

Our research suggests that, as a concept, KT is less linear and more dynamic than current definitions allow for. Interviews and case studies built a nuanced picture across micro, meso and macro levels of a process that is iterative, complex, and involves power relationships and cultural and political factors.

Alongside these complex conceptualisations of KT emerged multiple labels describing the concept itself.

When we asked KT practitioners in the Global South how they understand and perceive knowledge translation, the most frequent understanding was



that it's about 'evidence use' for a specific impact, be it informing policy, decision-making or behaviour.

Our research suggests that KT experts and practitioners have a broad and diverse suite of labels to describe a complex set of roles and functions. The most frequently used labels for KT among our interviewees (who largely work in the international development sector) include evidence use, evidence-informed decision-making, and knowledge-to-policy.²

2.2 Who's included and excluded in KT processes?

Our research suggests that many people are involved in KT processes and can be considered KT practitioners. However, if we think of KT as a linear process with an eventual audience or 'target' rather than a dialogue, we risk excluding these target groups from being part of the process as KT interlocutors.

Based on the interviewees' experiences, KT practitioners were sometimes **researchers, project officers, think tank executives, trainers, communication officers, or local experts.** Often practitioners move between these roles. This also reflects the finding that KT doesn't happen in isolation. Context plays a critical role in determining the involvement of different actors in the KT process. The relative importance of each actor can vary greatly, as one informant noted:

"We need to acknowledge that each actor within the ecosystem has some influence [on knowledge translation]."

-Kirchuffs Atengble – PACKS Africa

At the national level, high-level policymakers and decision-makers were identified as the primary *targets* of KT. Other targets include researchers and academics from the scientific community, think tanks, and policy institutions. Additionally, members of communities affected by a policy problem were noted as important targets of KT. One informant emphasised the importance of the target audience (the users), stating:

"I'll say the first factor [of a successful KT project] should be the kind of relation between the knowledge producer and the users."

Diakalia Sanogo - IDRC Programme Officer, Senegal

The case studies also illustrate how so-called targets of KT can also be KT practitioners. In the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) case study, scientists themselves carried out knowledge translation by working within and with the tools

² A longer list of the most common KT synonyms in interviews: Evidence informed decision making; Evidence synthesis, Evidence use, Knowledge brokering, Knowledge construction through evaluation, Knowledge co-creation, Knowledge intermediation, Knowledge to policy, Knowledge transfer, Scientific engagement, Science to policy.



available such as research synthesis and academic publications. The Evidence Tori Dei case study illustrates how artists and members of the public can play an active role in translating research-based evidence – to the public.

However, some social groups were identified as excluded from the KT process. These include young people, rural communities, indigenous people, urban poor, women, and senior citizens.

One informant noted that there is a tendency to engage with communities that are more accessible, such as those with basic education, rather than with the chronically poor.

"(...) the chronically poor [are excluded] because, even when people are actually doing community engagement, there is still a tendency to go to communities that you can access, communities that might already have some level of basic education."

- Nick Perkins, International Science Council

"You have to make a point to [listen to] these kinds of citizens [the poor, children, the elderly] that would be hard to [reach]. This takes a lot of money. Technology [is] not usually a friend. You need to be in places, and in a country as big as Brazil, you need to be in all regions."

- Laura Boeira, Veredas Institute

Bureaucrats (as opposed to high-level politicians) and the private sector were also identified as relatively forgotten actors in the KT process. One informant noted that universities are starting to collaborate with the private sector to put knowledge into use and secure funding.

"Universities are now starting to see that (...) they need to be [putting] knowledge into use. And for that, some universities are collaborating with the private sector now. And this is something that we [IDRC] have encouraged because we said, 'okay, to get money, to get funding from the private sector, you need to make sure that (...), you let them know what you can do for them, the type of research results that you can have for them' (...)."

- Diakalia Sanogo - IDRC Programme Officer, Senegal



2.3 The challenge of measuring knowledge translation outcomes

Our research suggests that it is difficult to measure KT outcomes, stemming from a lack of standard indicators and differences between concepts and labels. Context also matters, with indicators ideally locally-driven, flexible and focused on usefulness.

Most informants found it challenging to evaluate the outcomes of knowledge translation. Although they agreed that evaluating the outcomes of KT-related activities was useful, **they acknowledged that the basis for determining success is uncertain and constantly changing.**

Researchers from the Global South told us that they are eager to develop their own change theories, which could result in a more context-sensitive project design and, ultimately, more accurate and tangible success indicators.

One informant specifically stressed the importance of incorporating “culture” (understood here as institutional/social context) as a crucial variable in measuring the outcome of KT activities. This means considering culture while designing KT initiatives tailored to specific audiences and incorporating culturally-sensitive indicators in institutional change frameworks (for instance, working with indigenous leaders instead of focusing solely on lobbying policymakers).

"They [funders] need to understand the context. The difficulties, their reasons for which they need to adjust their own indicators, metrics to accommodate some of these contextual challenges that we are faced with here."

- Kirchuffs Atengble, PACKS Africa

Again, both the Evidence Tori Dei and IPCC case studies illustrate this point. Evidence Tori Dei’s design was shaped by the storytelling culture in Cameroon. The specific tools used by the project drew from local communication practices. The same could be said about the IPCC case in which researchers used scientific culture and tools to incorporate the knowledge of African experts and practitioners into the evidence base that informed the IPCC report.

2.4 Enablers and challenges to doing KT in the Global South

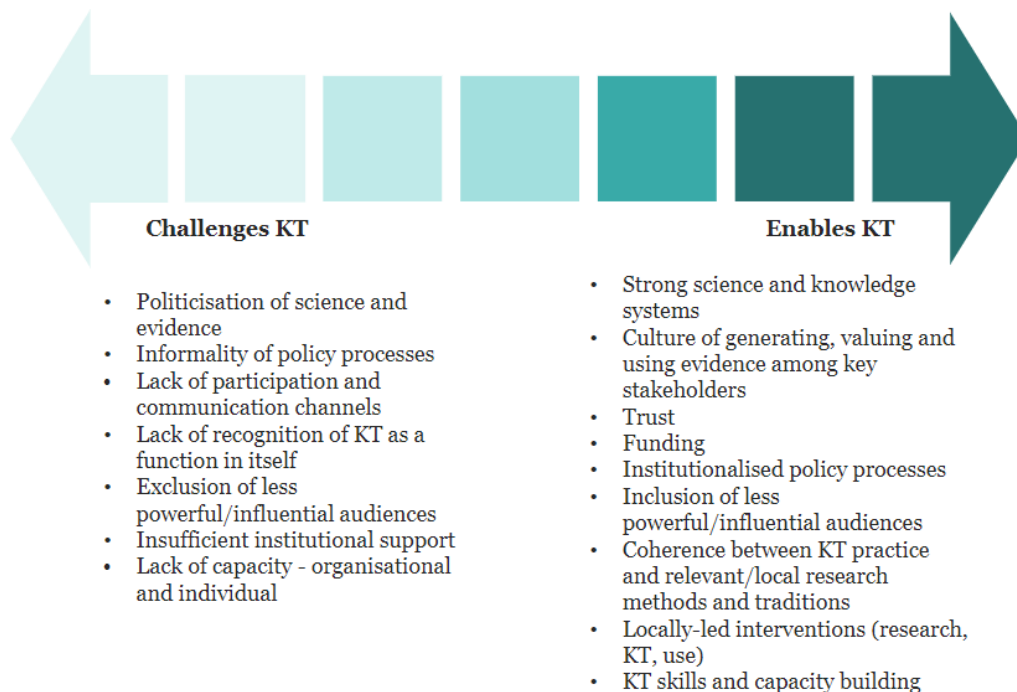
Our findings suggest that KT practitioners in the Global South have access to the same skills, tools and channels as their peers in the Global North, but context is the key difference to whether KT practices are enabled or challenged.



Therefore, when attempting to explain the challenges and enablers KT practitioners face in the Global South, we should avoid assuming a ‘southern exceptionalism’. Rather than a clear boundary between the ‘north’ or the ‘south’ we found more nuanced shades in the relative development and strength of informal and formal institutions and organisational

Figure 2 provides a summary of the main enablers and barriers we observed from the interviews and cases.

Figure 2. Some of the factors our findings suggest contribute to KT



Barriers

Most challenges we found are operating at the macro and meso levels - affecting all actors across society and all institutions in the policy research ecosystem. Interestingly, however, funders focused their attention on the meso and micro levels instead.

At the macro level, interviewees mentioned issues such as **informality in the policymaking process**, which makes the uptake of evidence challenging in the Global South.

This informality is often reflected in the absence of formal scientific advisory systems or structures. According to one informant, the government tends to favour research projects they have commissioned and control. This often results in the formation of



closed circles composed of individuals trusted by the government, which excludes input from broader civil society actors and development partners. Initiatives to embed evidence-use within the executive branch by establishing dedicated policy-labs can therefore be crucial, as exemplified by our Evidencia MIDIS case study in Peru.

On the other hand, Nick Ishmael Perkins, who is employed by the Science Council, also highlighted the **politicisation of science and knowledge** as a barrier that obstructs the open use of evidence. Others pointed to additional structural obstacles, such as **inadequate funding** and a **poor culture of learning and using evidence**. There is also evidence of **discrimination towards female scientists and researchers**, which acts as an additional barrier.

Regional differences play a crucial role in KT. Different regions have unique characteristics that need to be considered when approaching KT. Informants discussed the need to address **language barriers** as a challenge to **increasing collaboration among actors**.

"We used to do [...] policy training, communication for policy, and we used to do that for Latin America. We used to do that for Africa. We used to do that for the Middle East, and for each of those regions, the dynamics were very different. You know the Latin Americans will take up the scale and really run with it, and you can see it. Africans were open to it. [...]. In the Middle East, there was some sort of resistance."

- Sherine Ghoneim - Economic Research Forum

"We are very diverse in the region, in Latin America. There is a communication barrier between Brazil and Spanish-speaking countries. I don't know if it has been due to resistance; it seems to me that it has been due to a lack of effective communication channels. We do not consume the culture of the other, nor do we consume the music of the other, nor the television channels of the other, nor the products of the other, and in terms of knowledge translation, there is a big barrier."

- Carolina Santacruz – International Science Council

KT funders themselves can be a barrier to effective KT. When funders intervene in local research agendas without being mindful of the local context, they risk creating imbalances in the local knowledge system. In some cases, the presence of international organisations taking over specific issues can negatively impact the ability of local actors to engage in a particular sector. This results in **limited opportunities for local partners** to shape contextual research agendas, forcing them to balance the needs of the local context and donors' interests.

Informants also highlighted the **limited understanding of local research methods** and needs by Global North funders.



"They [funders] act as if they don't have anything to learn as researchers in the Global North, when in fact they have a hell of a lot to learn because they don't know how to work effectively with their products in the Global South. [...] And they often don't acknowledge that they don't know. [...] and if you don't really do that in a genuine way [learn], and acknowledge that you've got gaps, then you're assuming that you're better and you know more [...]."

- Fred Carden, Knowledge to Policy researcher

"There are some instances where people come from the wealthiest nations, and they end up in this community, and for them, it's like they're completely lost. So how do you expect the community to relate to you in that sense? So there are a lot of disconnects. I feel like our approaches and methods are not being well understood."

- Linda S Khumalo - University of the Witwatersrand, Center for Learning on Evaluation and Results

The interviewees also noted that KT processes **tended to exclude final users** and stressed the importance of making evidence accessible and interesting for different audiences. How research is conducted can also be a barrier:

"The researchers have done their [...] literature review; they've understood what the problem is. They have a very strong problem statement. But very rarely will you find that these researchers actually reached out to who they intended to be the final users of the evidence and understand where they will be coming from."

- Diana Warira – JPAL Kenya

Enablers

Informants emphasised the significance of the context in which KT occurs. **One informant stressed the value placed on "science" or "evidence" by various actors in the knowledge ecosystem, such as policymakers, universities, think tanks, and citizens, as critical enablers.** This was particularly apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic, where countries with strong science communication and evidence utilisation traditions saw close collaboration between governments and scientists to inform response strategies and public acceptance of government recommendations. One informant noted that a favourable view of science and trust in evidence is linked to the availability and quality of such evidence. The capacity, at different levels, to produce and use evidence is, therefore, a necessary enabler.

Trust and collaboration among stakeholders were emphasised as crucial enablers of KT. The interviewees stated that for successful KT, actors in the knowledge system must engage in sustained relationship-building processes. Strong collaboration between actors is often a recipe for successful KT as was evident in the



alliance between academia and public advocacy groups in the Sugary Beverage Tax in South Africa case. Equally, the *Más Días para Cuidar* (More Days to Care) project only managed to stage its public exhibition after collaborating with several entities from both government and the private sector. As one interviewee illustrated:

"In Senegal, there was a researcher interested in poverty issues, and for years, he did research projects [...], he went in and met with policymakers and just sat in their offices, met with the opposition, sat in their offices and talked about these issues. So, when they [policymakers] had to respond to external forces [...] they went to him because they knew him, they trusted him. They had met him, and they had a relationship with him. And so, he was somebody that they could actually trust, and he wasn't from the [World] Bank. You know, he was from the local university."

- Diakalia Sanogo - IDRC Programme Officer, Senegal

Trust is crucial as it is also an enabler for many other KT factors - with a lack of trust presenting a significant barrier.

Finally, several interviewees highlighted **the importance of "long-term," "multi-year," and "core" funding as an enabler**. They emphasised that the availability of such funding enables organisations to pursue and develop their research agendas, as well as build their internal capacities. The volatility of funding is a common challenge, as illustrated by Rose Oronje from the African Institute for Development Policy:

"Do they [funders] understand our context because often they will be giving us some funding, but they'll give you funding to say yes, 'do something for two years'. [...]. If I want to change the things I have to change in Kenya, two years is not enough, I need ten years".

- Rose Oronje - African Institute for Development Policy

2.5 Role of funders in supporting KT

Observations from interviewees and case studies suggest that broadening what is understood as KT would allow for more spaces for funders to support successful KT processes. Below we reflect on elements, dimensions and issues that our informants suggest could support more inclusive and successful KT in the Global South.

Aid dependency and conditionality affect KT choices. In some contexts, funders offer support based on certain conditions that involve the explicit or tacit expectation that researchers will follow their theories of change and demonstrate success through positive development outcomes defined by the funders. Grantees are faced with the challenge of either accepting these conditions or trying to negotiate a



more equal relationship with funders, where they proceed on the basis of their in-depth understanding of the context.

This dependency is exacerbated in the case of KT when it is reduced to a short-term programme or project. Incorporating KT across all functions as we have seen above could help address this. Linda Khumalo notes:

“It’s sad for me that we have to depend on donors all the time. And if donors change their priorities, you know, like Africa is always on its toes because the donors change their priorities.”

– Linda S Khumalo - University of the Witwatersrand, Center for Learning on Evaluation and Results

Funders play a role in helping translate local research to regional and global spaces. Funders can support Southern researchers to make their work more accessible on a global scale. The IPCC case study demonstrates that meaningful investment can connect local knowledge and research to global debates. Supporting Southern researchers to publish internationally and participate in global dialogues remains essential and helps to level the epistemic playing field.

To encourage grantees to be innovative in their KT process, donors should increase their **risk tolerance** and shift away from focusing solely on successful outcomes. By giving grantees ownership and agency over the KT process, donors can empower them to define, adjust and navigate the process based on their contextual knowledge and experience.

Encouraging grantees to experiment and test innovative approaches can foster innovation and help grantees step out of their comfort zones. Donors should be willing to learn from failures and celebrate them as learning opportunities, creating a more authentic relationship with grantees. To promote diversity, equity, and inclusion, donors could also consider expanding support beyond their usual beneficiaries rather than continually making repeat grants to the same organisations.

Funders can play a role in promoting greater inclusivity in KT functions. By funding organisations that more effectively represent, funders should seek to fund organisations that represent the needs of marginalised communities and populations. Funders can help ensure their voices are represented in KT functions, results, and agenda-setting. Funders can also connect these organisations with research and advocacy groups by acting as brokers or intermediaries.

3. Reflections and implications

By reflecting on the study's findings, we seek to understand:

- What is it about the context that matters?
- What can research funders do about it?

Knowledge translation is broadly understood by researchers and practitioners in the Global South. This was confirmed by our key informant interviews and case studies. Because KT roles and practice are so closely linked to others, no single definition could be identified from the interviews and cases. Instead, the more general “evidence use” was widely understood to be the meaning and purpose of knowledge translation. And in line with this, researchers and practitioners in the field recognise the dynamic nature of the relationship between evidence, policy and practice.

Therefore, knowledge translation cannot be cleanly separated from other activities involved in efforts to promote the use of evidence. According to the practitioners we interviewed and the cases we reviewed, knowledge translation is, or should be, part of setting a research agenda, undertaking research itself, engagement with an organisation's primary audiences, communicating or disseminating results and recommendations, seeking and delivering policy advice, and building or strengthening partnerships or coalitions for change.

Knowledge translation practitioners cannot always be identified as different to others performing different roles. For instance, researchers can, through traditional academic research processes, fulfil a KT function, while in other cases, the function will be performed by specialists in certain types of communication tools (e.g., podcasts) or audiences (e.g., policymakers).

We also found that knowledge translation practice and tools are widely available across the world. There is no obvious skills-divide between the Global North and the Global South. For instance, researchers and communicators in Argentina have access to the KT practices used in Europe and are equally capable of applying them themselves – and even improving on them. The policy lab examples from Peru, for example, reflect two models of embedded KT units which have been adapted and adopted in multiple countries. The proliferation of digital tools makes this global marketplace increasingly even.

The main factors affecting KT practice in the Global South refer to the nature of the contexts in which KT practitioners, broadly understood, operate. Not surprisingly, our study confirms these factors often focus on the relative weakness of the institutions that make up the broader evidence-informed policy ecosystems. These contextual challenges influence the choice and effectiveness of KT strategies and tools as researchers in the Global South are faced with:

- Weaker and less established knowledge systems (both in supply and demand; scientific communities, scientific advisory systems, the civil service, the media, political parties, etc.);
- Political contexts dominated by corruption, patronage, informality and vested interests resulting in unfavourable conditions towards evidence-use;
- Structural inequalities and difficulties for the participation of excluded and disadvantaged groups; and
- Limited public funding for science and research.

These contextual factors do not just affect KT practice but also influence the roles that different stakeholders are able to play in any effort to generate, communicate and, ultimately, use evidence. As a consequence, various sections of society are still excluded from KT processes. The most frequently cited by our informants are 1) young people; 2) rural communities and indigenous people; 3) the urban poor and other deprived communities; 4) women; and 5) senior citizens.

Context also defines what counts as success, of course. In most of the cases studied, KT was successful when its practitioners identified the main audience they needed to engage with, the tools needed to tailor and deliver their messages and an understanding of how to overcome contextual challenges.

These findings are important because they steer us away from the narrowly defined supply-side, demand-side, or intermediary interventions and instead point towards the importance of systemic interventions.

In practice, this involves funders:

Adopting a broader and more nuanced understanding of knowledge translation that pays greater attention to its function or purpose (i.e. to facilitate the use of evidence) than to narrowly defined activities or roles.

In practice, this would involve, for example:

- Avoiding narrow or linear definitions of KT in funders' strategic documents, programme or project design or evaluations.
- Supporting the incorporation of a KT purpose or objective in partners' strategies.
- Incorporating a KT purpose or objective in any research project.
- Presenting partners with examples of KT roles and practices to inspire their project designs that take into account the rich diversity found in the field: from the use of research synthesis and academic publications to public art to embedded teams in government.

Actively supporting the global exchange of skills and experiences. It continues to be important to critically document the rich field of knowledge translation

practice, continuously invest in strengthening skills and competencies and facilitate direct engagement between KT practitioners. This can be done globally even if funders' efforts are aimed at supporting stakeholders in the Global South.

Relying on partners' and researchers' own assessments of their contexts to determine how best to incorporate the knowledge translation function and purpose into their work. Donors need to listen more to grantees and let them lead in setting the agenda. Funders often develop global theories of change that guide their funding decisions and seek grantees who align with these theories. However, this top-down approach fails to give local researchers and KT practitioners the flexibility to develop contextually relevant theories of change that address local needs.

To encourage grantees to be innovative in their KT process, donors should **increase their risk tolerance and shift away from focusing solely on successful outcomes**. By giving grantees ownership and agency over the KT process, donors can empower them to define, adjust and navigate the process based on their contextual knowledge and experience.

Encouraging grantees to experiment and test innovative approaches can foster innovation and help grantees step out of their comfort zones. Donors should be willing to learn from failures and celebrate them as learning opportunities, creating a more authentic relationship with grantees.

This would include allowing partners to decide, among other things:

- When, how and who is best positioned to engage with their primary stakeholders.
- How best to assess the impact of their efforts.

Actively considering the impact that the wider system will have and how to address it when designing or deciding to support knowledge translation efforts - even if these are narrowly defined as demand, supply or intermediary-led. We do not suggest that individual funders must attempt to tackle all system-level factors that affect the success of efforts by their partners to translate knowledge; but funders (and their partners) should have an explicit understanding of the factors that affect their success, how they are affected by them and what, and who, could do something about them.

In practice, this would involve that, for example:

- In designing a project aimed at adopting new storytelling and digital communication approaches by research centres, the funder could consider what efforts need to be made to strengthen the capacity of national mainstream and independent media.
- In developing a regional strategy to support research on a particular sector, the funder could consider what investments are necessary to ensure that the research produced by its partners is of high quality.

- In evaluating a programme or project aimed at producing research to inform policy, the funder could also consider assessing what it did to promote other funders' investments in government's capacity to use evidence, political parties' programmatic capabilities, etc.

These complementary interventions could be supported by other funders.

Playing a more active role in promoting greater inclusivity in KT functions.

At the same time, funders can carefully intervene by, for example, supporting organisations that more effectively represent the needs of marginalised communities and populations. Funders can also connect these organisations with research and advocacy groups by acting as brokers or intermediaries.

Investing in the study of KT as a part of other fields – and not only as a field on its own. Understanding institutional contexts is important in knowledge translation as this practice is inextricably linked to a larger system that includes efforts to undertake research, capacity development, campaigning, advocacy, stakeholder engagement, and more. Hence, to better understand KT, its study should be incorporated into the wider fields of evidence-informed policy or the sociology/political economy of knowledge rather than as a separate field in itself.

4. Annex

4.1. Methodology

Timeline of primary data collection

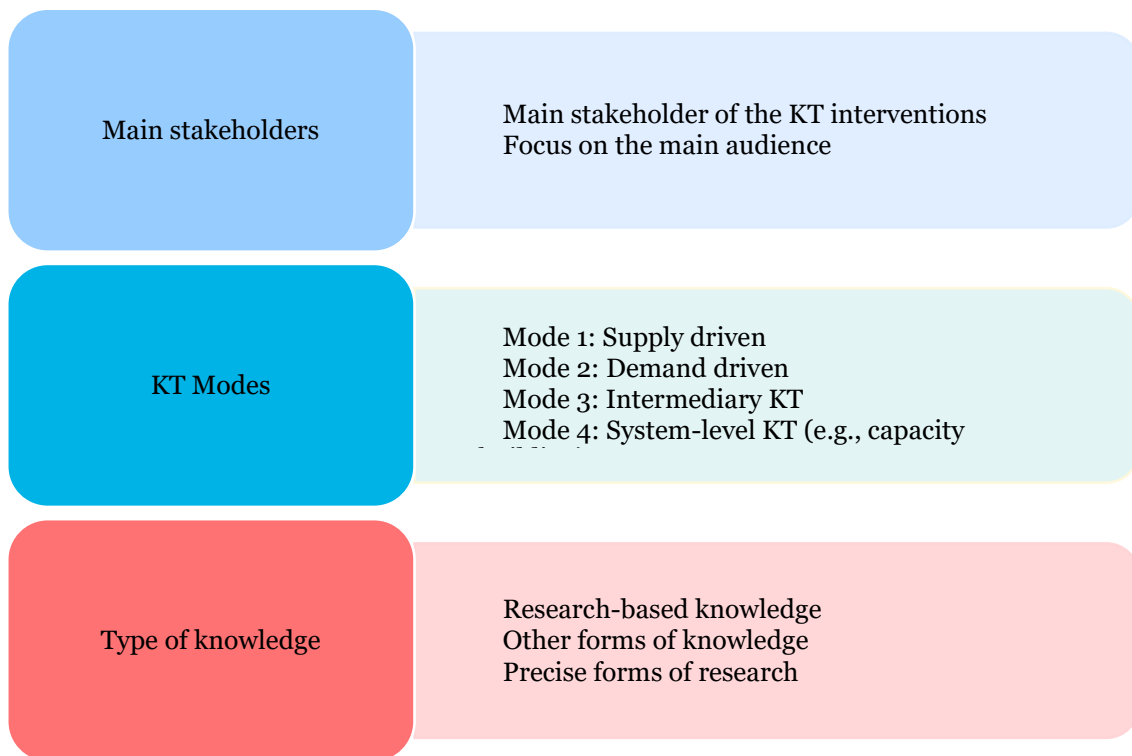
Pulse survey	29 June 2022 – 21 August 2022
Key informant interviews	7 July 2022 – 16 September 2022
Case studies	September – November 2022
Think Pieces	September – November 2022

Complete informant list for key interviews

No	Name	Affiliation	Interview date	Language	Sampling
1	Fred Carden	Independent	7 July 2022	English	Purposive
2	Kirchuffs Atengble	PACKS Africa	14 July 2022	English	Purposive
3	Linda S Khumalo	University of the Witwatersrand, Center for Learning on Evaluation and Results	15 July 2022	English	Purposive
4	Charity Chisoro	Africa Center for Evidence	21 July 2022	English	Snowball
5	Nick Perkins	International Science Council	28 July 2022	English	Purposive
6	Carolina Santacruz	International Science Council	28 July 2022	Spanish/English	Snowball
7	Marcel Hadeed	Robert Bosch Stiftung	1 August 2022	English	Snowball
8	Laura Zommer	Chequado	3 August 2022	Spanish/English	Purposive

9	Anshuman Karol	Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA)	8 August 2022	English	Purposive
10	Diana Warira	JPAL Kenya	8 August 2022	English	Purposive
11	Rose Oronje	AFIDEP	8 August 2022	English	Snowball
12	Sherine Ghoneim	Economic Research Forum	10 August 2022	English	Purposive
13	Laura Boeira	Veredas Institute	11 August 2022	English	Snowball
14	Anushiya (and Gyanu)	Southasia Institute of Advanced Studies	18 August 2022	English	Purposive
15	Claire Leifert	DGAP (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik) / Thinktank Lab	19 August 2022	English	Purposive
16	Diakalia Sanogo	IDRC (Cameroon office)	19 August 2022	English	Purposive
17	Ronald Munatsi	Zimbabwe Evidence Informed Policy Network	23 August 2022	English	Snowball
18	Ponge Awuor	African Policy Centre	3 September	English	Snowball
19	Gayle Scarrow	Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research	31 August	English	Snowball
20	Daniel Suryadarma	ADB Institute	2 September	Bahasa Indonesia	Purposive
21	Annette Boaz	Transforming Evidence	16 September	English	Purposive

Case study selection framework



We chose to prioritise stakeholders over the other dimensions, as agreed with the members of the Learning Journey. We expect this will help address the question of embedded power within KT processes ('knowledge for/by/with whom') as actors may be interested in targeting stakeholders they see as influential or can be influenced.

The dimension of the modes of KT is useful to better understand on-the-ground processes and institutional arrangements, as has been the norm in existing literature on the subject. We then looked into the underlying forms of knowledge used in KT to also address ontological debates of knowledge in this field.

During the interviews and the Learning Journey sessions, we sought out cases using the following criteria:

- Representative of different KT modes, which informed the initial search for cases.
- Projects or experiences that were live within the last 5 years
- Project that met the working definition of KT.

Projects that were Southern co-led³ (but can be funded by a non-Global South country or organisation).

³ The nature of co-leadership will elicit some discussion. The nature of power relations is often hidden and so what may look like a collaboration is in fact not so. To the research team it is important that the Southern partner in a collaboration retains full agency.

Research limitations

Many informants work in intermediary organisations who may not perform on-the-ground activities or engage directly with communities with regard to KT. While this does not reduce the validity of the information received through interviews, we acknowledge this as a caveat as we aimed to engage with a bigger number of grassroots practitioners. We also encountered difficulties mapping and reaching out to KT practitioners in East Asia, the Caribbean, and other areas classified as the Global South.

Case study limitations

First, the case studies were not meant to be representative of KT practice across the Global South nor useful as a method of comparison. Each case needs to be understood within a particular context that affects all aspects of KT from its inception, process and outcome. A deeper understanding deriving from the analysis of each case should help to highlight the generative mechanisms underpinning KT in contexts of the Global South. Secondly, each case portrays KT actors or entities that operate at different levels and sectors. As the risk of comparative perspective has been explained above, cases are not meant to be measured or analysed in juxtaposition but need to be understood separately. Lastly, given a vast landscape of KT examples across sectors and geographies, the research team has to omit many valuable examples but plans to accommodate some of the remaining eligible cases in the form of *KT* snapshots.

4.2. Research ethics

An internal Ethics Review of the research proposal undertaken by IDS considered this research ‘Low Risk’. Despite the minimum potential for harm to participants, the research team strived to uphold the standards provided by IDS while also being aware of positionality and potential bias when selecting and conducting interviews with informants who mostly identify as researchers from the Global South.

As a team of researchers with mostly Southern backgrounds, we believe that, in some instances, the multinational character of our research team has helped informants to disclose information more fluidly. We conducted three interviews in our informants’ first language (two in Spanish and one in Bahasa Indonesia).

Participation

- Participants have not received any payment or in-kind compensation for partaking in the research.
- Think Piece contributors have not received any compensation for their writing.

Confidentiality and data management

- A consent form and information sheet on the research purpose was shared with all informants prior to interview. All informants were required to fill in and submit this form to the research team.
- The research team asked for permission to record interviews, the Sensemaking session and other platforms of discussion.
- Consent forms were returned and stored on an IDS server.
- All full recordings are stored on an IDS server with undisclosed file names – initials only.
- All transcripts are stored on an IDS server.

4.3. Interview protocol

Guiding questions

1. Please tell us a little bit about your organisation/project/ and its objectives. What is the role of knowledge in achieving those objectives?
2. Based on your activity and experience, how would you define or describe *knowledge translation*?
 - Is there a particular term you prefer using to describe your (organisation's) activities?
3. In general, what do you think is the purpose of knowledge translation?
 - In the context of your own work, what kind of societal challenges does knowledge translation try to address?
 - How can knowledge translation address problems of inequality?
4. Who do you think is the target of *knowledge translation*?
 - Are there any social groups left out of KT processes? How do you make sure that KT processes are open and inclusive?
 - Apart from funding actors, who has been a source of support for your activities?
5. Generally, what do you think indicates a successful KT project?
 - What factors determine a successful KT outcome?
 - Is there a fundamental difference with KT in the High Income Countries?
 - Can you think of a particular KT example worth sharing as a lesson of success/failure?
6. In your opinion, what are the biggest challenges in delivering KT in the global south?
 - What do you think are the enablers and barriers to doing knowledge translation?
 - How has Covid-19 affected your activities on knowledge translation?
7. How can funders better support your organisation/project?

- Apart from financial support, what other support or facilitation would help your cause?

4.4. Case studies

Rationale and framework

The case studies presented in this section look at three main dimensions: *Main stakeholder, KT Mode, and type of knowledge*. As outlined in the methodology section in chapter 1, the case selection also considers regional and sectoral representation. The selection of cases aimed to dive deeper into the purposes, actual challenges and impact created by the practitioners in their respective projects or activity.

By identifying the main stakeholders, or audience, and the reasoning for its selection, we aimed to go beyond looking at the delivery of KT as a project and more as an attempt to deliver evidence and knowledge to a specific user. Understanding audience is, in essence, a crucial step in mapping the context (Bennett and Jassani, 2011)

We thought this would shed more light on how KT can be successfully delivered under challenging circumstances. This aspect is particularly difficult to highlight when viewing KT through a supply and demand framework. At the same time, we have strived to achieve a balanced selection based on the dimensions and criteria.

This section first presents the six cases we have selected and eight further short profiles (snapshots) based on the same selection criteria. These cases have allowed for deeper, more contextual findings from KT activities that build on the insights we obtained from key informant interviews. Cross-cutting findings from the cases are presented by way of concluding this chapter.

The table below provides an overview of case study findings.

No.	Case study	Dimension	Key lessons
1.	IPCC	Stakeholder: Government agencies, international dev. organisations General public Mode: 3- <i>brokering/intermediary,</i>	The project has been very successful in increasing the uptake of Africa-focused climate change impacts and adaptation research within the IPCC Working Group II Report. The unintended outcome of bridging the inclusivity gap by providing an opportunity for young African scholars to contribute to the research synthesis process and providing

		<p><i>4-systems strengthening/capacity building</i></p> <p>Evidence synthesis</p>	<p>mentorship and peer learning support.</p>
2.	Tax on Sugary Beverages in South Africa	<p>National Treasury</p> <p>Health department</p> <p>Public coalitions</p> <p>2 - demand driven</p> <p>Economic research</p> <p>Health research</p> <p>Economic modelling</p> <p>Public surveys for campaign</p>	<p>Evidence-use backed by the right political will but contested by economic interests.</p> <p>This has also been a valuable lesson in terms of coalition building, especially between researchers and academia with the public side of campaigning, which was undertaken by more than one entity.</p> <p>Highlights the importance of understanding political and economic dimensions of policy-making and where evidence is situated in competing interests of local actors.</p>
3.	Mas Dias para Cuidar – CIPPEC	<p>General public and policymakers</p> <p>1- supply driven</p> <p>Policy evaluation</p>	<p>The most quantifiable impact of the project was the public exposure to the photographic exhibition. CIPPEC estimates that in the 14 days during which the exposition was on display at Retiro station, it reached 28 million people.</p> <p>A focus on diversity and inclusion in the design and creation of the project was crucial to the success of the communication campaign. The campaign not only sought to communicate to a diverse audience but also to include a focus on diversity and inclusion.</p> <p>The project is a successful example of how to include audiences in knowledge translation, becoming participants in the creation of</p>

			knowledge and not just recipients of the information.
4.	Evidence Tori Dey	<p>Audience: Targeted communities in Cameroon and wider regions in Sub-Saharan Africa</p> <p>1 - supply driven and 3-brokering</p> <p>Scientific evidence in health, education, gender, social research</p>	<p>This is an example of a highly contextualised, culturally attuned case knowledge translation. At the heart of this case is the use of evidence being translated into a variety of cultural products and delivered to communities with a low literacy rate. Translation of said evidence into a local language has also been key. The presence of collaborators, including funders (e.g., French Embassy), also assisted in the process as eBASE Africa attempts to scale up the reach of their Evidence Tori Dey project.</p>
5.	Evidencia Midis	<p>3 - brokering/intermediary and 2 - demand driven</p>	<p>Evidencia Midis has gained acknowledgement as a "legitimate interinstitutional space" focused on identifying evidence from "within". The interest in this type of evidence has expanded to other actors in different ministries in Peru and abroad.</p>
6.	In the Field Podcast	<p>Audience: <i>Development practitioners</i></p> <p><i>Social researchers</i></p> <p><i>Lay audience</i></p> <p>3 - brokering and 4 - capacity building</p>	<p>This podcast allows practitioners to reflect on the relation between theory and practice, giving listeners, especially the lay audience, a deeper, better understanding of many development themes. Also, by using a digital platform, the producers are able to access stats to identify their audience more accurately.</p>

Raising the Voices of African Scholars on Climate Adaptation via IPCC Process

A. Case study name	Raising the Voices of African Scholars on Climate Adaptation via IPCC Process
B. Primary stakeholder(s)/ audience	Decision/ Policymakers: IPCC Review Committee, government agencies, African Union, international dev. Organisations, CSOs at global, regional and national level
C. Type of Mode	3-brokering/intermediary, 4-systems strengthening/capacity building
D. Type of knowledge	Evidence synthesis across Africa

What is this case a case of?

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is a UN body which assesses the science related to climate change. The IPCC prepares Assessment Reports published every 6-7 years on the scientific, technical and socio-economic knowledge of climate change. These reports primarily target policymakers and underpin intergovernmental climate-change negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. They provide the scientific basis for governments and other actors at all levels to develop and implement climate-related policies.

Each Assessment Report consists of a number of chapters submitted by scientists around the world. Submissions are voluntary, with no financial support or remuneration for contributions. Tight timelines and limited word counts also present challenges and sometimes result in important research being left out. For these reasons, the IPCC process tends to be driven by Northern actors, who synthesise available data predominantly by Northern researchers or with Southern researchers receiving sub-awards. Northern scholars, many of whom receive support from their governments and universities, dominate the process.

This case study explores the results of an IDRC and FCDO-funded grant through the Climate Adaptation and Resilience (CLARE) Initiative within the context of authorship of research findings for the IPCC 6th Assessment report. The grant allowed authors from the Global South (Chris Trisos and Mark New) to write two chapters for the IPCC report, the Africa chapter (chapter 9) and a chapter on decision-making options for managing risk (chapter 17).

In parallel, the grant also enabled them to leverage their expertise and networks, engage in research beyond the IPCC process and work with young scholars to build their capacity for contributing to future assessment cycles. The group also found innovative and inclusive approaches to knowledge translation to engage a wide range of stakeholders beyond the IPCC's primary stakeholders throughout the research synthesis process.

This case provides a strong example of knowledge translation as a Mode 3: brokering/intermediary role and illustrates its contribution to Mode 4: system strengthening/capacity building for young African scholars. It also offers an approach which funders and researchers can replicate to disrupt similar research processes.

Impactful KT approaches

There was a clear need to undertake synthesis research of existing literature on the extensive body of research on climate adaptation in Africa to understand the range of adaptation options and explore the feasibility of using the evidence to inform policy decision-making. The authors assessed the existing research and identified several gaps in the available data. They also undertook desk research and used satellite data sets and climate models to analyse new data and generate new research findings. This new research contributed directly to the IPCC report.

Beyond the boundaries of the IPCC process, the authors found other pathways for engaging with stakeholders, including creating several spaces for gathering direct feedback and amplifying the findings from their research synthesis to reach new audiences. They also held webinars and consultations and were quoted in over 500 newspapers and TV and radio appearances. Upon publication of the report, the enhanced visibility and brand power boosted the authors' credibility and resulted in many requests from other institutions to assist them with their climate risk strategy.

Other engagement highlights included:

- Several webinars for policymakers and other knowledge users (e.g., African Group of Negotiators and South African Presidential Climate Change Commission)
- Collaboration with CDKN on short fact sheets on climate change impacts and adaptation for North, West, Central, East, and Southern Africa and the publication of an IPCC fact sheet on Africa
- Members of the project team wrote sections of the [African Union Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan, 2022-2032](#)
- The government of Belgium set up a national security council for climate change, largely informed by both the IPCC report and evidence generated via the parallel research

Why do they do what they do or why did they choose a particular audience? (purpose, motivation, project inception)? Who supported them (material-immaterial wise)? Was the KT process inclusive?

The lead authors from the African Climate and Development Initiative at the University of Cape Town used the IDRC/FCDO grant to write the IPCC chapters and undertake parallel research. They employed interns and chapter scientists to work with them on

the process. The [Sixth Assessment Report AR6 Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability](#), released in early 2022, was deemed to include the strongest-ever Africa regional chapter on how climate change impacts the continent. It also strengthened African evidence throughout the report, as other chapters were able to draw on the newly synthesised knowledge.

To counter the lack of African evidence in peer-reviewed journals (which means it cannot be cited in IPCC Assessment Reports), the team generated high-profile synthesis journal papers and enabled that evidence to be cited in the report. Some notable examples include work on [climate change literacy in Africa](#), [climate risk to African heritage](#), quantified [climate finance flows and climate research investments](#) for Africa and expanded climate-change [risk assessment methods](#). They also helped map [human action on climate change adaptation](#) globally.

The grant supported the process to be more inclusive as the team included young African scholars as research assistants and interns who gained experience, which has positioned them to lead in future IPCC assessment cycles.

“As an early career scholar, contributing to the first ever multidimensional feasibility and effectiveness assessment of adaptation options applicable to the African region was such a huge opportunity. The experience, expert guidance, and scientific collaborations fostered through the learning process was completely transforming. I keenly look forward to taking a lead role in the next assessment process (i.e. AR7).”

Portia Adade Williams, research scientist, Science and Technology Policy Research Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research in Accra, Ghana.

The primary audience for this work was the IPCC community, who rely on the findings from the report to inform their decisions. This community comprises global, regional and national policymakers, civil society organisations, international organisations, funders, researchers, and the media. The Africa chapter team were clear in their approach to target this community. They crafted key messages to ensure clarity and accessibility to policymakers, published research papers tailored to researcher interests and shaped messages to allow funders to identify investment opportunities and gaps.

The team also held sessions with experts on the continent to validate findings and ensure the synthesis included all relevant studies. This also allowed researchers to identify gaps and challenges and discuss adaptation options. Given the budget and time constraints of the IPCC process, the team did not engage other audiences in the validation process, which presents a missed opportunity.

What has been the main impact of this KT case?

Chapter scientists and research assistants were crucial to successful assessment processes. Their support made the voluntary nature of that commitment more manageable. Their support in publishing existing research in peer-reviewed journals enabled more evidence to be used in the IPCC report.

“The Africa regional chapter presents the clearest and most comprehensive review of the continent ever contained in an IPCC report. The new level of synthetic assessment undertaken by the Africa team highlights a diverse range of climate change issues significant to Africa, and has also advanced the understanding of climate change risk across the entire report.”

Debra Roberts, IPCC co-chair

The grant successfully achieved its aim of increasing the uptake of Africa-focused climate change impacts and adaptation research within the IPCC reporting process. It also had the unintended result of bridging the inclusivity gap inherent in the IPCC process by providing an opportunity for young African scholars to contribute to the research synthesis. The scholars received mentoring and peer learning support, which will support them in playing leading roles in future IPCC reports.

South African Tax on Sugary Beverages

A. Case study name	Evidence-use to support campaign for a tax on sugary beverages in South Africa
B. Primary stakeholder(s)/ audience	National Treasury, Health department, Public coalitions
C. KT Mode	<i>2-demand driven</i>
D. Type of knowledge	Economic research, health research, economic modelling, public surveys for campaign

What is this case a case of?

This is a case of evidence-use to fight the obesity epidemic in South Africa by promoting a tax on sugary beverages. The tax was introduced to reduce the consumption of sugary drinks and was signed into law in December 2017 before going into full effect in April 2018.

This case is largely considered successful as the South African government, backed by quality evidence, managed to impose a 11% tax on the sugar beverage industry through a combination of political will, sound data and a concerted public campaign to support the move. Priority Cost-Effective Lessons for System Strengthening South Africa (PRICELESS), a research-to-policy unit at the University of Witwatersrand, was tasked with conducting research and modelling on potential impacts of such tax on the reduction of obesity and other non-communicable diseases (NCDs). The use of sound evidence was crucial to convincing lawmakers and the public of the importance of introducing the bill – described in legislation as the Health Promotion Levy (Cullinan et al. 2020).

However, the fact that the proposed tax rate of 20% was eventually diluted to 11% due to the industry’s opposition shows how knowledge translation should always take political economy into account, especially within economic sectors prone to intervention by big industries.

Why do they do what they do or why did they choose a particular audience? (purpose, motivation, project inception)? Who supported them (material-non material wise)? Was the KT process inclusive?

Prior to the actual campaign and policy process that started around 2016, South Africa's health department had already begun to adopt the National Strategy for the Prevention and Control of Obesity 2015-2020 (Cullinan et al. 2020). The document stipulated the introduction of fiscal measures, including taxes, to lower the consumption of unhealthy foods to reduce obesity and the risk of NCDs. South African society and its government would benefit from reduced health risks while creating more fiscal space through increased taxes from the beverage industry.

To support this move, the government commissioned PRICELESS to conduct research mainly from an economic perspective but also from a legal and health point of view. This also entailed a comprehensive campaign and advocacy done in a coalition to garner political support for the proposed tax. The media campaign titled "Are You Drinking Yourself Sick" ran from October 2016 to June 2017, and based on a post-event survey, 78% of the respondents were able to recall the main message of the campaign (Murukutla et al. 2020) indicating success from a knowledge translation and communication perspective.

What challenges were encountered? How were they overcome?

The main challenges faced by researchers and proponents of the tax came from the sugar drink industry through the Beverage Association of South Africa. The industry mirrored the move of using evidence by also commissioning research done by Oxford Economics, an economic research company (Cullinan et al. 2020, 8). The industry gathered its allies to use a similar tactic to influence public opinion, such as press briefings.

As its proponents, opponents used evidence to argue how introducing such a tax would result in job loss and thus damage South Africa's growing economy. The narrative became 'obesity vs job loss'. Researchers working on the policy had to coalesce with many sections of society. They established a campaign coalition named the Healthy Living Alliance to control the competing narratives in the public sphere and move strategically. Messages had to be well formulated and aimed at the right audience, especially through mass media, as both proponents and opponents of the tax used paid advertisements to spread their message.

What has been the main impact of this KT case? What are the lessons learned?

This is an example of evidence-used backed by the right political will but contested by economic interests. Important lessons can be drawn from a public communication/campaign perspective and how evidence is utilised within a discourse competition. This has also been a valuable lesson in terms of coalition building, especially between researchers and academia with the public side of campaigning, which was undertaken by more than one entity. The idiom that knowledge is never

neutral and is shaped by those wielding power has never been clearer in this case. It is only because of the industry's interference that the tax has been set at 11%, lower than the 20% demanded by its proponents.

From a knowledge translation perspective, this case also highlights the importance of understanding political and economic dimensions of policy-making and where evidence is situated in the competing interests of local actors. It also emphasises the importance of knowledge producers establishing networks or coalitions with knowledge brokers (e.g., communication professionals) or other allies to allow every actor to play to their strengths and undertake knowledge translation as a concerted effort.

Embedded Policy Labs in Peru

A. Case study name	Government-led KT: The case of Evidencia Midis
B. Primary stakeholder(s)/ audience	Decision-makers, policymakers, programme managers from the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion, and other ministries. Public servants in Peru and abroad Researchers, academics Think tanks
C. Type of Mode	Evidencia Midis - brokering/intermediary, demand-driven
D. Type of knowledge	Evaluations of programs and initiatives implemented by the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion;

What is this case a case of?

Evidencia MIDIS is a knowledge translation initiative led by the Peruvian Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion (MIDIS). MIDIS' General Direction for Monitoring and Evaluation leads the evaluation of social programmes in the areas of child nutrition, early childhood development, economic inclusion, and elderly protection and then publishes evaluation results, methodology notes, and policy briefs in a digital platform (Evidencia Midis).

The main objective of Evidencia Midis is to share evidence about social programmes in an accessible and "user-friendly" way. The main audiences of this knowledge translation initiative are policymakers and decision-makers at the national and local levels, academics, think tanks, students, and international development officials.

Why do they do what they do or why did they choose a particular audience? (purpose, motivation, project inception)? Who supported them (material-immaterial wise)? Was the KT process inclusive?

Evidencia Midis emerged as a way to make evidence from social programmes' evaluations available to the users from the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion and other ministries in an open-access web platform.

The motivation behind this initiative was to disseminate existing evidence from evaluations – that was not being systematically disseminated before this initiative – to ensure that policy and decision-makers had easy and timely access to relevant evidence to inform social programmes and policy and contribute to research production and debate in Peru. The main objectives of Evidencia Midis are to strengthen the culture of evidence for decision-making, promote discussion and analysis around the use of evidence, and ease access to existing evidence.

The knowledge translation process starts with evaluating social policies and programmes. The evaluation is led by the General Directorate for Monitoring and Evaluation (DGSE). The DGSE has in its mandate to evaluate social programmes designed and implemented by the Ministry and is responsible for establishing mechanisms and procedures to promote the use and dissemination of evidence. Each year, the DGSE identifies the programmes and areas that will be evaluated in consultation with different areas of MIDIS. This process is conducted in consultation with programme and department leads. After a prioritisation exercise, the DSGE decides what and how to evaluate. After an internal editing process, the results are shared with relevant stakeholders, and evaluation outputs (methodological notes, summaries, policy briefs) are published in the Evidencia Midis platform.

The web platform was developed in 2017 and launched with the publication of a selection of evaluations. Up to 2018, Evidencia Midis published 96 documents: 33 evaluation reports, 28 evaluation summaries, 14 policy briefs, and 10 methodological notes. Between 2020 and 2021, the platform was expanded to include a higher number of evaluations and also started publishing policy briefs, visual content, and disseminating events.

In addition to publishing evidence-based outputs, Evidencia Midis organises spaces for exchange and reflection in the form of online and in-person events to discuss the findings of evaluations and studies relevant to the MIDIS. The events also feature evidence produced by external actors and other topics relevant to the MIDIS' areas of work. The events are held monthly and online to ensure access and participation of different actors, including national and international experts, researchers, policy, and decision-makers.

What challenges were encountered? How were they overcome?

The main challenge during Evidencia Midis' inception was ensuring that the DSGE had the institutional mandate to evaluate and share evidence. This was ensured early on with the support and engagement of current and former ministers of development and social inclusion and the Ministry's technical leadership of the DSGE, who saw value in developing and strengthening MIDIS' ability to produce and disseminate evidence. Currently, MIDIS and the DSGE have internal normative frameworks, which facilitate the DSGE's work and contribute to a culture of institutional evidence creation and use. This shows that the sustainability of evidence use requires political and institution-wide commitment.

The main audiences of Evidencia Midis are policymakers at the national and sub-national levels. Evidencia Midis' users come from rural and urban departments across Peru. However, it is worth noting that users are highly concentrated in Lima. And so, there is a need to expand access and strategies to ensure the participation of a wider spectrum of actors, especially at the subnational level where many social programmes are implemented.

Other challenges the initiative faces are related to the 'usability' of evidence. There is a deep understanding inside the DSGE that evidence needs to be timely and relevant for policymakers to use it. Furthermore, the results of evaluations must reach the users that require them the most, so the DSGE has made important efforts to adjust the outputs disseminated in the Evidencia Midis platform to meet the needs of policymakers. This has included the development of 'user-friendly' outputs such as methodology notes and policy briefs. The DSGE has also identified the need to innovate how evidence is presented (for example, explore video content).

What has been the main impact of this KT case? What are the lessons learned?

According to Evidencia Midis data, more than 70% of visitors to the platform say they are satisfied with the information available, and 60% indicated that the design and content made it easy to find what they are looking for.

Evidencia Midis has gained acknowledgment as a "legitimate interinstitutional space" focused on identifying evidence from "within". The value added of this initiative is that the demand for evidence comes from government actors (MIDIS and its programmes and areas) who shape and inform the production and use of evidence. The interest in this type of evidence has expanded to other actors in different ministries in Peru and abroad. Evidencia Midis has successfully created discussion and exchange spaces involving organisations and people outside the government, including local NGOs, think tanks, journalists, civil society, and multilateral organisations. In the long term, these actors are likely to continue to demand the government to use evidence to design and implement policies.

Evidence for Paternity Leave

A. Case study name	CIPPEC: More days to care.
B. Primary stakeholder(s)/ audience	General public and policymakers.
C. Type of Mode	1-supply driven
D. Type of knowledge	Policy evaluation

What is this case a case of?

Más Días para Cuidar (More Days to Care) was an initiative launched by CIPPEC (Center for the Implementation of Public Policies for Equity and Growth) in 2017 to modify the maternity, paternity, and family leaves regime in Argentina. Its purpose was

to create "a scheme that universalised access to *days to care* and promotes a fairer division of care tasks."⁴ The project sought to impact, on the one hand, the members of two legislative commissions working on a proposal to modify the regime and, on the other hand, the general public to position the issue among the public opinion.



Image 1. *Más Días para Cuidar* photo exhibition. Credit: CIPPEC

With this in mind, CIPPEC launched a campaign aimed at the general public while at the same time promoting the modification of the licensing regime within the Argentine Congress. The initiative, supported by CIPPEC, the Swedish Embassy in Argentina, Arredo and the United Nations Development Program, had the following components:

1. A public policy recommendation to modify the licensing regime.
2. A photo contest of Argentine fathers caring for their children.

⁴ CIPPEC, 2017. Online: <https://www.cippec.org/proyecto/mas-dias-para-cuidar/>

3. A photo exhibition at Retiro station (the busiest train station in the country) and a media campaign on social networks.
4. The visit of Swedish social security officials who met with Argentine authorities and policymakers.

Why do they do what they do or why did they choose a particular audience? (purpose, motivation, project inception) ? Who supported them (material-immaterial wise)? Was the KT process inclusive?

In 2017, CIPPEC⁵ identified a need to modify the maternity, paternity, and family leave regime⁶ and sought to promote the discussion in the legislative branch by establishing a dialogue – which was not very fruitful – with two commissions that were preparing an opinion on the matter:

“We saw a lack of political will as the issue was not a priority in public opinion. We thought that if we put this issue on the public agenda, we could achieve increased interest with the authorities.”

Gala Díaz, Executive Director of CIPPEC (2022).

For this reason, CIPPEC approached the Embassy of Sweden, as it is one of the countries with the most generous family leave regimes in the world and home to Johan Bävman, a photographer who had recently developed the project "[Swedish Dads](#)", a series of portraits in which he captures Swedish fathers who are on paternity leave.

Inspired by this project, CIPPEC and the Swedish Embassy invited Bävman to Buenos Aires to hold a photo contest on social networks (portraying Argentinian fathers), carry out a photo exhibition, and invite Swedish social security officials to engage with legislators. The Swedish Embassy provided funding for the visitor's expenses, while Arredo, an Argentine company with an inclusive and socially responsible approach, funded the photo exhibition and social media campaign.

Initially, the photographic exhibition was to be held in a museum. However, the organisers feared that limiting the photo exhibition to a museum would be elitist and reduce its impact. Arredo proposed taking the exhibition to a train station so that it could have a massive and inclusive impact. As a result, CIPPEC established an alliance with the public authority and the contractor who ran the Retiro Station. The Photo exhibition was installed in just one night as the organisers feared the government could revoke the permits.

⁵ The Center for the Implementation of Public Policies for Equity and Growth (CIPPEC) was founded in Argentina in 2000 and works on better building public policies. The More Days to Care project was created by CIPPEC's Social Protection Program which has been working on caregiving issues since 2011.

⁶ In Argentina, the Labor Contract Law (LCT) that regulates private employment establishes 90 days of leave for mothers and 2 for fathers; in the national public sector, the benefits are 100 days for pregnant women and 15 for men.

The exhibit remained at the station for 14 days⁷ and showed photographs of Argentine fathers taken by contest winners and Arredo's photographers. The latter was given the task of capturing a diverse set of families from different regions and socioeconomic realities to reflect the diversity of fatherhood in Argentina.

What challenges were encountered? How were they overcome?

CIPPEC faced challenges in two areas during the implementation of the project; first, in pushing for the proposed modification of the Labor Contract Law and second, in communicating the evidence.

On the one hand, CIPPEC's care leave proposal was displaced from the discussion at the Congress by another project presented by the government in turn, which saw a window of opportunity for the presentation of its proposal. However, this project presented clauses that affected unionised workers and faced severe resistance in Congress.

Due to this and to a devaluation that occurred just a week after the presentation of the government's bill, the discussion was, in the opinion of CIPPEC's Executive Director (Gala Díaz), "stuck forever" because the country's political economy was no longer in a favourable moment to implement this reform.

On the other hand, CIPPEC's team had to articulate with several public and private actors like the Ministry of Transportation of Argentina, the concessionary companies of the station and the trains, as well as the media, business groups, and United Nations agencies, which signified a titanic work for the organisation. In addition, assembling the exhibition was a big challenge as it had to be installed in just one night.

Making sure that the proposal was understood from the Argentine logic and as a project designed from and for the needs of Argentine families was another challenge:

"We did not want to frame this as if we wanted to import the Swedish experience. We wanted the Swedish model to be an excuse to think about how the Argentine social welfare system should be and adapt it to our reality."

Gala Díaz, Executive Director of CIPPEC (2022).

The Swedish Embassy in Argentina was also very insistent on this point. They did not want their support for CIPPEC's project to be seen as an attempt to influence domestic policy as it would be detrimental to the Embassy's relationship with the Argentine government and the success of the law proposal supported by CIPPEC.

What has been the main impact of this KT case? What are the lessons learned?

⁷ From October 20 to November 2, 2017.

The most quantifiable impact of the project was the public exposure to the photographic exhibition. CIPPEC estimates that in the 14 days the exposition was displayed at Retiro station, it reached 28 million people. The organisation also participated in twelve radio and television interviews that arose organically after the inauguration.

The project also accomplished events at the United Nations Information Center, the Congress, and with Swedish social security officials visiting Buenos Aires that allowed CIPPEC to establish relations with the Argentinean Minister of Labor.

One impact that is difficult to quantify is that the exhibition made it easier to discuss caregiving, parenthood, and family leave issues, topics that were not on the public agenda. The project also prompted CIPPEC to engage in dialogue with an audience beyond its reach and its communication strategy: the general public.

“We learned how to engage the final user (of knowledge) without intermediaries. We realised that we were capable of doing it and that (in the future) we must be very attentive to identify projects that can touch people's heartstrings and have the potential to expand our communication strategy”.

Sebastián Zírpolo, former Communications Director at CIPPEC (2022).

A focus on diversity and inclusion in the design and creation of the project was crucial to the success of the communication campaign. The campaign not only sought to communicate to a diverse audience but also to include a focus on diversity and inclusion during different stages:

- 1** During the research process, sampling family licences on a regional basis.
- 2** During the design of the photographic exhibit, portraying diverse families (from different regions and socioeconomic realities).
- 3** During the implementation of the public campaign, choosing to exhibit the photographs in a massive public space.

Last but not least, the project is a successful example of how to include audiences in knowledge translation, becoming participants in creating knowledge and not just recipients of the information.

In the Field Podcast Media

A. Case study name	In the Field Podcast
B. Primary stakeholder(s)/ audience	Development practitioners, social researchers, lay audience
C. Type of Mode	Mode 3-brokering/intermediary and, to a lesser extent, Mode 4 through communications training
D. Type of knowledge	Research on development, lectures, thematic material

What is this case a case of?

In the Field is a podcast run by former development practitioners aimed to lend a voice to India's development and research sector. The show combines interviews, commentary and debate hosting experts with a variety of backgrounds. The hosts of the show, Radhika Viswanathan and Samyuktha Varma, are former development practitioners who felt that there was only limited space within the national media to talk about the currents in the development sector in India. Having gained enough experience working in India's development field and internationally, they decided to use the podcast to share their reflections and others' revolving around development and other emerging societal issues. Vaaka Media, the official media company they set up as the entity of their endeavours, runs other podcasts that tackle issues on gender (City of Women), science and society (Ex Machina), or the complex relations between civil society and philanthropy (No Cost Extension).

To run the show, the duo has used different forms of knowledge as they research each topic with care, as Radhika proclaimed:

“But we are very research-based, and so it's, you know, we do interview a lot of people. We do talk to a lot of people. We do a lot of fact-checking ourselves when we work in collaboration with institutions, you know, that are responsible for kind of the technical vetting, for instance, or the scientific vetting of the final product.”

Why do they do what they do or why did they choose a particular audience? (purpose, motivation, project inception) ? Who supported them (material-non-material wise)? Was the KT process inclusive?

The main motivation to run In The Field, according to Radhika, is to help people “understand how ideas are being, [...], put into practice, where they would come from, what the sort of trajectory of thinking was, and to make some links between them”. The lack of a communication platform to talk about development, research and policy among the practitioners is an irony often overlooked by its stakeholders. In the Field may just address this gap. Development practitioners in India and elsewhere are relentlessly expected to ‘engage’, be it with government, communities or other forms of

authorities, without having the space to freely communicate about the intricacies taking place behind the curtains of projects.

Rohini Nilekani Philanthropy supports the production of the show without intervening in the programme, letting the producers decide on topics and resource persons. Due to the show's relative success, institutions such as World Bank have taken an interest and asked to collaborate in creating tailored programmes.

What challenges were encountered? How were they overcome?

In the Field has a relatively narrow target audience that consequently limits its potential reach, as acknowledged by Radhika: “We knew that the show was going to be, the show is a little bit academic, so we knew it. It is pitched at a slightly different level from just complete simple storytelling”.

They also realised from the beginning that the podcast was not equipped as a vehicle to do advocacy or campaigning. It was always going to be a long stretch to claim so: “I think in the Indian context, policy happens in a much more rarefied atmosphere like it happens in a lot of kind of shows rooms via its own kind of mysterious set of processes and bureaucratic processes and things. So I think it would have been a stretch for us to assume that we could influence policymakers.”

What has been the main impact of this KT case? What are the lessons learned?

Using a digital platform allows for a limitless conversation as they reflected on the increasingly fragmented nature of India's development sector: “*Coming in naturally to work in this sector where there was perhaps a perceived understanding that the sector needs more management and frameworks. And so you see the rise of consulting firms coming in and things like that. And so I think for us there was suddenly this great expansion but a lot of conversations, but really what it ended up doing was siloing the sector far more.*”

The podcast also allows practitioners to reflect on the relationship between theory and practice. This gives listeners, especially the lay audience, a deeper, better understanding of many development themes. Also, by using a digital platform, producers are able to access stats to identify their audience more accurately. As argued by Radhika “*it's very much sort of 50-50 in terms of geographic in the sense that 50% of our listeners come from within India and 50% of our listeners come from outside of India. And that's quite a wide geographic spread.*” Geographically and demographically, the podcast has gone beyond its initial target audience and even managed to penetrate classrooms, which is beyond the producers' expectations.

Evidence Tori Dey

A. Case study name	Culturally relevant KT: Evidence Tori Dey
B. Primary stakeholder(s)/ audience	Targeted communities in Cameroon and wider regions in Sub-Saharan Africa
C. Type of Mode	1-supply driven, and 3-brokering/intermediary
D. Type of knowledge	Scientific evidence in health, education, gender, social research

What is this case a case of?

Evidence Tori Dey is a form of research uptake that uses storytelling as its primary means of translation. This method is used to deliver important evidence-based messages to targeted communities in Cameroon and its neighbouring regions. It was first introduced around 2016 by eBASE Africa in collaboration with Camcoso⁸ to educate non-literate communities in Cameroon on malaria. The eBASE Africa quickly recognised how illiteracy would hinder the spread of information that commonly comes in the form of letters and numbers. eBASE Africa came up with the idea to use forms of art, particularly storytelling, to ease the translation of research findings and reach out to impacted communities.

Why do they do what they do or why did they choose a particular audience? Who supported them (material-non material wise)? Was the KT process inclusive?

The primary reason to use storytelling in delivering research-based messages is its effectiveness in reaching the 'audience'. In the words of Penka Marthe Bogne, a researcher leading Evidence Tori Dey at eBASE Africa, the storytelling approach is effective as "*stories are communicated in the various language of each community, and it also helps communicate scientific research evidence in a digestible form, in a form that anybody from any background will understand*".

Storytelling is ingrained in Cameroonian culture, and Evidence Tori Dey uses other art forms such as dance, poetry, music or drama (Chisoro 2021) to reach 'resource-constrained' areas. The decision to use storytelling to promote evidence was supported by Cochrane, who provided evidence and data to be processed by the eBASE team. A pre-test was conducted to investigate the likeliness of using the method with the result of six out of ten consumers likely to accept evidence while four out of 10 were still hesitant (Ndi, Dohmatob, and Okwen 2020). The eBASE Africa team was encouraged to use the storytelling method and gained support from Cochrane, the French embassy in Cameroon, and Joanna Briggs Institute (JB). The support gave the team the impetus to venture into new issues, going beyond malaria treatment and health intervention and involving more professional storytellers along its course.

⁸ Cameroon Consumer Service Organisation (CamCoSo) is a consumer group affiliated with Cochrane

What challenges were encountered? How were they overcome?

Not every section of society was enthusiastic to hear messages requiring people to change their behaviour. Even getting them to come to storytelling events can be challenging in the first place. In the Cameroonian context, eBASE Africa storytellers found cultural norms that grant the village elderly and men permission not to attend such events a barrier.

According to eBASE Africa storytellers, on certain themes such as HIV/AIDS, cultural and religious taboos are also a hindrance. The relatively low literacy rate is a common hindrance, but given the different tools at eBASE Africa's disposal, this was a challenge they were prepared to meet. Evidence Tori Dey is an example of highly contextualised knowledge translation, as the eBASE Africa team worked meticulously in doing the work. The team summarised relevant evidence into "one sentence per piece of evidence" (Ndi, Dohmatob, and Okwen 2020). They also worked closely with artists to model the summarised evidence into art (songs, drama, stories, graphics and poems). The final piece is by staging performing arts events during which stories, poems, songs, dramas, and graphics were exhibited to communicate the collected evidence.

Before moving into a community and presenting the stories, the team would also conduct research to better understand the traits of each community and tailor their message accordingly. This approach was proven successful in Cameroon, and with support from the above-mentioned collaborators, they are looking to replicate this method in neighbouring countries. Evidence Tori Dey is also highly inclusive as they are trying to reach out to some of the most marginalised groups, mostly in rural Cameroon.

What has been the main impact of this KT case? What are the lessons learned

Evidence Tori Dey is an example of a highly contextualised, culturally attuned case knowledge translation. It is initiated by researchers, a team set up by eBASE Africa, but executed in close collaboration with skilled communication practitioners, in this case local storytellers. At the heart of this case is the use of evidence being translated into a variety of cultural products (songs, drama, stories, graphics and poems) and delivered to communities with a low literacy rate. Translation of said evidence into a local language has also been key. The presence of collaborators, including funders (e.g. French Embassy), also assisted in the process as eBASE Africa attempts to scale up the reach of their Evidence Tori Dey project.

4.5. KT Snapshots

This section profiles eight cases that add further insight into forms of knowledge translation but could not be treated as case studies due to practical considerations. During the course of this research, we listed a considerable number of KT cases across sectors, and regions. These eight short profiles depict the variety of such cases and are also chosen based on the framework we have introduced. The PhotoVoice case, for example, was initially chosen as a case study but had to be limited to a shorter profile due to time constraints and difficulty in gaining access to credible informants. The snapshots are also meant to capture other potential trends within KT globally, as we aim to depict through profiling a series of emerging public events.

PhotoVoice

A. Case study name	Photovoice: Expanding the voices of women and girls in Kenya
B. Primary stakeholder(s)/ audience	Policymakers
C. Type of Mode	Brokering/intermediary
D. Type of knowledge	Primary research

What is this case a case of? What has been the main impact of this KT case?

This case portrays the complexity behind evidence uptake for policymaking. As a participatory methodology, Photovoice offers alternative ways for historically marginalised groups to narrate their stories and experiences.

Nyarino (Nyariri 2021) discusses the impacts and effectiveness of a study that used ‘Photovoice’ in Korogocho, the second-largest informal settlement in Nairobi. The study aimed to highlight the barriers to school continuation and re-entry for pregnant girls and young mothers and prompt policymakers to rethink school re-entry policies. First, participants in the study took photographs of what they perceived as their challenges. Then, the study findings and the pictures taken by the participants were presented to policymakers in a public exhibition as part of a workshop. Nyarino then assessed the policymakers’ reactions to the exhibition.

Overall, Nyarino observed reluctance from policymakers to engage with the exhibition or provide feedback. She noted that “being invited to the policy discussions might not necessarily translate into the group’s view being considered to inform policy formulation.” Nyarino reflects that resistance might occur because policy frameworks are still “heavily anchored on patriarchal systems” where most of the senior decision makers and policymakers are men who might still hold patriarchal ideologies on young mothers’ re-entry to school.

What are the lessons learned?

Even though policymakers were not receptive to the perspectives of the young mothers presented through the Photovoice exhibition in this study, Nyarino highlights the importance of these types of methodologies as meaningful ways to expose social injustices, inspire social change and let girls and women lead in policy change on issues affecting them.

A key takeaway from this case is the recognition that exhibitions, a central part of Photovoice methodologies, are not the end but the beginning of the policy dialogue and that considering audiences is a critical feature of visual research methodologies.

Colabora.Lat

A. Case study name	Colabora.Lat: a post-COVID collaborative governance project
B. Primary stakeholder(s)/ audience	Policymakers, government agencies Researchers, universities, think tanks
C. Type of Mode	supply-driven brokering/intermediary
D. Type of knowledge	Policy evaluations, surveys, desk research, primary research

What is this case a case of?

Colabora.Lat is a three-year project financed by IDRC that seeks to generate multidisciplinary and comparative analysis to understand the effectiveness of COVID-19 responses in Latin America and identify innovations in social mobilising, citizen participation, and campaigning that can be supported and scaled. The initiative strongly focuses on understanding the impact of policies on vulnerable populations in the region. The project aims to achieve its goals by 1) assessing the state of the knowledge in the areas of interest, 2) gathering local-level information and analysis, and 3) systematising learning and policy recommendations.

Key outputs of the project include [research papers](#) and [blog posts](#) on collaborative governance, multilateral cooperation, the care economy, and COVID-19 responses, and organising [regional meetings](#) and conferences that bring together actors from six countries in the region. In addition, Colabora.Lat launched a [Collaborative Governance Index](#) that measures national governments' levels of engagement and interactions at the subnational level and with actors such as scientists, social movements, and private companies.

Colabora.Lat is led by an Implementation Council formed by universities and think tanks with research and territorial experience in six countries in Latin America.

What has been the main impact of this KT case? What are the lessons learned?

This project promotes collaborative governance as a way to involve different types of actors at the regional level. By engaging actors with different capabilities and comparative advantages, the project generates the ability to identify solutions to complex problems in Latin America. Furthermore, the project aims to highlight the impact of collaboration on the feasibility, effectiveness, and legitimacy of COVID-19 strategies. This approach creates regional spaces for knowledge sharing and contributes to the collective design of development strategies informed by country experiences and perspectives from different actors.

Use of Evidence Helpdesk

A. Case study name	A help desk to accelerate the use of evidence by policymakers and practitioners in West Africa
B. Primary stakeholder(s)/ audience	Policymakers, government agencies Researchers, universities, think tanks at national and regional level
C. Type of Mode	Supply-driven
D. Type of knowledge	Research synthesis

What is this case a case of?

ACED Benin launched an evidence service named “Helpdesk” to assist policymakers and practitioners in accessing, understanding, and using evidence to inform their interventions. Upon requests, the helpdesk produces evidence syntheses on various topics through a five steps process: eligibility checking, scoping, systematic review, evidence synthesis, and guiding the mainstreaming of the evidence into concrete decisions.

The evidence syntheses produced by the helpdesk are more than compilations of available knowledge on the investigated topics. They also propose a critical interpretation of evidence and meaning in the specific context of the end users. For example, ACED produced an evidence synthesis for the West African Development Bank on the determinants of adopting improved agricultural technologies by smallholders in West Africa. The developed evidence synthesis was meant to inform a regional programme on improved agricultural technologies.

Requests for evidence syntheses can be submitted online using the form “ request” or by contacting the helpdesk directly.

What has been the main impact of this KT case? What are the lessons learned?

Governmental and non-governmental actors in West Africa have a go-to resource for the synthesis of existing evidence on a range of priority challenges to inform decisions. Beyond the responsive helpdesk service that provides timely inputs for policymakers and CSOs, the helpdesk offers an opportunity for ACED to engage in ongoing dialogue and offer continuity in evidence synthesis on an ongoing basis. Actors such as the Benin Ministry of Agriculture, the Benin National Fund for Agricultural Development, and the West African Development Bank can begin to develop a relationship with ACED and develop a long-term partnership with ACED as a go-to source for evidence synthesis across a range of priority topics. ACED could consider moving from a purely responsive model to a proactive research synthesis centre focused on a set of priority policy issues.

Art as a vehicle for knowledge co-construction

A. Case study name	Citizen Voice: the arts as a vehicle for knowledge co-construction
B. Primary stakeholder(s)/ audience	Civil society, general public, policymakers, environment activists
C. Type of Mode	Supply-driven, intermediary
D. Type of knowledge	Research based, local knowledge

What is this case a case of?

Communicating science and social issues can be done through various means. In the case of *Citizen Voice*, the arts are used as the main medium to engage with multiple stakeholders across Senegal, Mauritania and Mali and discuss urgent environmental concerns. The project works with citizens, advocacy groups, policy actors and artists, exploring the use of storytelling to achieve a shared understanding of the imminent challenges faced by communities against the background of climate change. While certain groups have addressed environmental problems, most efforts have not been done in unison and are communicated in sectoral silos (Institute of Development Studies et al. 2022). This is the underlying problem the project was aiming to address. The assumption was that arts and cultural forms of engagement would be able to open up the space and instigate dialogues that embrace and encourage diverse understandings, experiences, worldviews and opinions (ibid).

What has been the main impact of this KT case? What are the lessons learned?

The project has revealed important lessons. Contrary to common perception, in this case, the use of arts has only partially managed to bring together difficult messages to a variety of stakeholders. It turned out that the use of arts in communicating environmental issues was “more successful when carried out by artists who already have a relationship with powerful groups, and may have worked with them to promote top-down government messaging “ (Institute of Development Studies et al. 2022, 7). The working paper commenting on the project reiterates the importance of understanding context, concluding that “arts-led dialogue may not be appropriate in all contexts, due to established hierarchies and the risks it can pose to artists and citizens“ (*ibid.*).

Communicating science to the masses - The Conversation Indonesia

A. Case study name	The Conversation Indonesia
B. Primary stakeholder(s)/ audience	General public and media
C. Type of Mode	Brokering/intermediary and capacity building
D. Type of knowledge	Academic research and popular scientific articles

What is this case a case of?

The Conversation Indonesia (TCI) is an online platform that publishes research-based articles written by academics and researchers with an emphasis on a more popular, journalistic style of writing. It is part of The Conversation’s [global network](#), with the Indonesian office founded in 2017. TCI also offers training for academics to better reach out to different audiences, primarily through the medium of writing. In recent years they have also conducted workshops with young scholars on how to better inform policy-making processes and on thought leadership.

What has been the main impact of this KT case? What are the lessons learned?

Despite being part of The Conversation’s global portfolio, TCI has made use of its relative autonomy to pursue its own editorial and publishing strategies. TCI has also strived to grow a sustainable business model by seeking partnerships (with higher education institutions, media platforms, private sector) to reduce reliance on funding agencies and the headquarters in Melbourne. As a recognition of their publishing endeavours, the Indonesian Cyber Media Association awarded TCI with *best content distribution* in its inaugural ceremony in November 2022. A key to TCI’s successful outreach is their editorial policy of allowing articles to be republished by select media outlets and using a Creative Commons License instead of copyrighting their articles.

TCI also proactively contacts academics to have their research summarised and published on the platform rather than waiting for incoming submissions.

A series of KT events

A. Case study name	Africa Media Festival, Zambia Diaspora Festival, Famelab
B. Primary stakeholder(s)/ audience	Community, general public, policymakers
C. Type of Mode	3-brokering/intermediary, 1-supply driven
D. Type of knowledge	Academic research, applied research

What is this case a case of?

There is an increasing trend of festivals, public fora and competitions building on the theme of science and knowledge. While informing policy and decision-making may not be the primary objective of those events, they all incorporate elements of public consultation with the effect of spreading the use of knowledge and evidence. They also enhance more popular forms of science engagement. Some examples we can mention here are the [Africa Media Festival](#), [FameLab](#), [Falling Walls](#) competition, and the Zambia Diaspora Festival.

We also note that these events are not exclusive to certain geographical contexts but are widespread in the Northern and Southern hemispheres. There is no monopoly over content, forms and delivery, as each festival is tailored for its purpose. For example, the FameLab competition based in Switzerland accommodates the regional language as it runs up to the international final stage.

What has been the main impact of this KT case? What are the lessons learned?

The presence of such events supports the democratisation of knowledge and creates linkages between communities within the wider knowledge system as a whole. They also contribute to the further blurring of boundaries between formal knowledge producers and citizens, encouraging more widespread use of science and research among the public in general.

Bidur Water Forum

A. Case study name	Bidur Water Forum
B. Primary stakeholder(s)/ audience	<i>Government, international dev. organisation, local communities.</i>

C. Type of Mode	<i>2-demand driven</i>
D. Type of knowledge	Field research, policy evaluation and survey.

What is this case a case of?

The Bidur Water Forum was an event organised by the Southasia Institute of Advanced Studies (SIAS) in association with the Bidur Municipality and Bidur Drinking Water Users Committee. It took place on the 17th of October 2019 in Bidur, Nuwakot (Nepal), intending to convene the local government, consumers and drinking water user committees, among other stakeholders, to discuss “Water Security Challenges and Opportunities”⁹.

The Forum, supported by the SIAS while carrying out research for a policy paper on *Water security in times of disaster risks*¹⁰, served as an opportunity for multiple stakeholders to communicate and learn about the impact of local community actions, in particular of small water users’ committees, in strengthening and diversifying water access in the region during the 2015 Gorkha earthquake and for the future.

What has been the main impact of this KT case? What are the lessons learned?

The Forum allowed SIAS to communicate findings regarding the impact of small water users’ committees – in providing water access to Bidur’s marginalised communities in times of crisis – to the local government, which was not aware of the successful water supply strategies that local communities in Bidur had carried out for decades.

With research-based evidence and knowledge, SIAS prompted discussions during the Forum that led the local government to recognise they needed a long-term water supply strategy and that smaller and fragmented springs (being managed by local communities) needed to be taken into account. Furthermore, after this event, the Bidur municipality has been actively supporting existing local water supply schemes.

Additionally, based on the evidence provided by SIAS and the local community, the Bidur government has recognised that neither an approach only focused on large-scale construction projects nor only focused on small-community projects are the solutions to Bidur’s water crisis and that a “twin-track strategy of supporting larger and smaller projects simultaneously”¹¹ is needed.

⁹ SIAS (2022). Online: <https://sias-southasia.org/bidur-water-forum/>

¹⁰ SIAS (2020). Online: https://cdkn.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/PolicyPerspective_Water_Security_DisasterRisks_English.pdf

¹¹ SIAS (2022) p.7. Online: https://cdkn.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/PolicyPerspective_Water_Security_DisasterRisks_English.pdf

Micro-theatre on democracy and corruption

A. Case study name	Micro-Theatre on democracy and corruption
B. Primary stakeholder(s)/ audience	General public, intermediaries, and media
C. Type of Mode	Supply -driven and brokering/intermediary
D. Type of knowledge	Academic research and journalistic research

What is this case a case of?

IDEA International is a global organisation that aims to strengthen democratic institutions. Over the years, their work in Peru has involved support to political parties, public policy bodies and civil society organisations – including policy research centres.

IDEA International’s experts are frequent media commentators on matters related to political party system reform, democratic institutions and electoral processes.

Like many other organisations in the country, they have been concerned with the quality of public debate on matters of public interest. (See, for example, the efforts of Peruvian (and Latin American) think tanks to [inform electoral processes](#).)

Microteatro hosts 15-minute plays in partnership with independent theatre producers and actors. Originally from Spain, it launched a local theatre in Lima’s cultural district, Barranco. In 2018 and 2019, IDEA International produced “[Micro-teatro por la democracia](#)” in partnership with Microteatro Lima. The plays were written and produced by teams of playwrights, journalists and political scientists. They focused on a range of issues, from corruption to democratic participation using comedy, drama and satire to communicate their messages.

What has been the main impact of this KT case? What are the lessons learned?

The plays allowed experts to explore how best to engage with different audiences - especially those looking for entertainment rather than technical information.

After the pandemic, IDEA International launched the [Laboratorio de acciones escénicas](#) (Laboratory of scenic arts actions), offering more than 30 theatre artists the space to develop activities to inform the subnational election in 2022. The laboratory has allowed artists to become more involved in political movements and issues they considered not sufficiently informed about or interested in.

Therefore, this space offers the opportunity to translate knowledge for at least two audiences: a broad and hitherto disengaged audience and the scenic arts community.

4.6. Think Pieces

As part of this research project, OTT commissioned a series of think pieces. We invited contributors from the Global South and North to reflect on the future of knowledge translation based on their context, insights, and perspectives. [Read the series online: https://onthinktanks.org/series/reflections-on-the-future-of-knowledge-translation-in-the-global-south/](https://onthinktanks.org/series/reflections-on-the-future-of-knowledge-translation-in-the-global-south/)

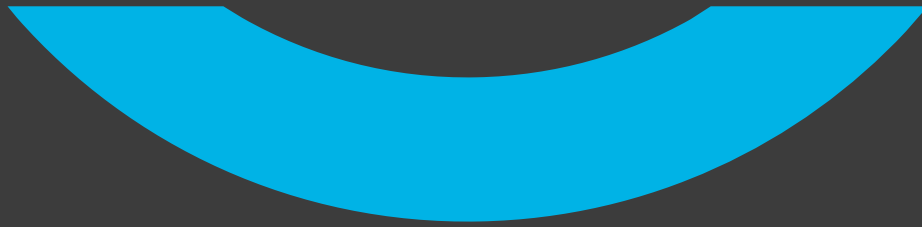


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