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Internal Evaluation of the Core Activities
supported by
the Global Development Network[*]

REPORT OF THE GDN SECRETARIAT

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[*] This report complements the Terms of Reference for an independent evaluation of GDN and pursues the limited objective of presenting an overview and assessment of GDN's activities. It should be considered in conjunction with the report of the independent evaluators, Drs. Peter Muth and Fred Gerlach, which primarily focuses on the process of network/institution building, governance, and finance. Drs. Muth and Gerlach presented their preliminary findings at the meetings of the GDN Governing Body and the donor support group on January 27 and 28, 2004, in New Delhi. Their final report is expected in March 2004.

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ACRONYMS

AERC   African Economic Research Consortium (RNP in Sub-Saharan Africa)

CERGE-EI   Center for Economic Research and Graduate Education – Economics Institute (RNP in Eastern and Central Europe)

CIS   Commonwealth of Independent States

EADN   East Asian Development Network (RNP in East Asia)

EERC   Economics Education and Research Consortium (RNP in the CIS)

ERF   Economic Research Forum for the Arab Countries, Iran, and Turkey (RNP in the Middle East and North Africa)

EUDN   European development Research Network (RNP in Western Europe)

GB   Governing Body

GDN   Global Development Network

GDN-NA   GDN – North America (RNP in North America)

GDNet   The umbrella title for GDN's online information initiatives

GRP   Global Research Project

LACEA   Latin American and Caribbean Economic Association (RNP in Latin America and the Caribbean)

MIR   Multidisciplinary and Intermediation Research initiative

NGO   Non-governmental organization

ODN   Oceania Development Network (RNP in the South Pacific)

RNP   Regional network partner

RRC   Regional Research Competition

SANEI   South Asia Network of Economic Research Institutes (RNP in South Asia)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Global Development Network
Launched at the First Annual Global Development Conference in Bonn in December 1999, the Global Development Network (GDN) now incorporates eleven regional network partners (RNPs) spanning the entire world and benefiting thousands of researchers in more than 100 countries. GDN promotes the generation, sharing, and application of multidisciplinary knowledge to advance development policy.

Core Activities
This report assesses GDN's five core activities:

- **Regional Research Competitions (RRCs)**—a program of small research grants administered by the RNPs. By February 2004, GDN had disbursed more than $14 million and awarded over 490 grants through this program.
- **Global Development Awards and Medals Competition**—the largest annual international contest for the best research on development produced by researchers from developing and transition countries. More than 2,000 scholars have participated in this competition.
- **Global Research Projects (GRPs)**—major projects involving research teams worldwide that address the most pressing issues of development. Thus far, three projects have been implemented within the comparative, cross-country context—*Explaining Growth, Understanding Reform,* and *Bridging Research and Policy*.
- **Annual Global Development Conferences**—international forums for exchanging ideas on sustainable development and poverty alleviation, with the particular focus on research generated in the developing world. More than 2,500 scholars from over 100 countries have attended GDN's five annual conferences since 1999.
- **GDNet**—the electronic voice of GDN provides researchers and policymakers with access to an online library of scholarly papers and databases of leading research institutes and researchers. The monthly GDNet newsletter currently reaches more than 13,000 subscribers.

Principal Conclusions
With respect to GDN's objectives, this report concludes that during the four years of the network's existence, it has achieved significant progress in building research capacity and sharing knowledge. However, GDN has yet to demonstrate success in informing policy.

With respect to its five core activities, drawing on the surveys and interviews with GDN's beneficiaries as well as independent evaluations of the programs, the report concludes that:

- **The five core activities address the self-reported needs of the research community in developing and transition countries.** The 1999 survey of 512 research institutes throughout the developing world revealed strong support for a global network focused on development research and its translation into policy. Nearly all of the respondents rated an institution like GDN as "valuable" or "extremely valuable," while annual meetings, staff exchanges and fellowships, and information on funding opportunities emerged as

the top-rated activities. The later, 2003, survey of the Cairo conference participants revealed that the value attributed to GDN's activities basically matched the respondents' needs and highlighted GDN's annual conference as the most valuable among GDN's activities.

- **The five core activities are effective in meeting the needs of the GDN community, especially with respect to building capacity and sharing knowledge.** For example, an independent evaluation of the RRCs conducted in 2001 concluded that the RRCs are an effective tool for building research capacity and highlighted the standard RRC practice of competitive grant competitions as a mechanism to ensure the high quality of research and its policy relevance. Similarly, the 2003 independent evaluation of the *Explaining Growth* project, which has resulted in 24 thematic papers and 80 country studies, revealed the project's significant impact on capacity building and the effectiveness of partnerships between researchers from developed and developing/transition economies. The International Economics Association also favorably evaluated this GRP's contributions to the literature on growth.

- **The five core activities have achieved broad, truly global, geographical scope.** GDN's gradual expansion of research partnerships (from seven in 1999 to 11 in 2003) and the establishment of three regional networks in developed countries (2000–2002) have resulted in GDN's presence in all parts of the world. The number and representation of participants in all activities also attest to the network's global outreach. Reflecting GDN's broadening scope, the number of subscribers to its newsletter increased from 7,200 in 2001 to 13,000 in February 2004, while the number of hits on the GDN website rose by 66 percent between January 2003 and January 2004.

Implications for the Future
This report, together with the report of the independent evaluators that primarily focuses on the process of network/institution building, governance, and finance, will form the basis of an Action Plan for GDN's future development to be presented to the donor community. To that end, this report points to four issues that the Action Plan should address:

- **Refinements in specific activities.** While the five core activities are effective in building research capacity and sharing knowledge, they can and should be improved. For example, GDN is exploring opportunities for reducing conference expenses. Thanks to the economies on airfare and conference facilities, GDN's expenses per participant have already declined from almost $3,500 in 2003 to $2,700 in 2004. As another example, GDN intends to take the first step in opening the Awards Competition to applicants whose primary language is not English by instituting the Prize for Research in French at GDN's next annual conference in Dakar, Senegal (January 2005).

- **Additional funding.** The five activities—especially the RRCs and the GRPs—have succeeded as effective tools for investing in human capital in the developing world and simultaneously revealed that current levels of funding are woefully insufficient. To bridge the gap between demand for and supply of home-grown research, at least $1 million more is needed to better fund the RRCs. Similarly, implementation of the two

new GRPs, which are currently under review, will call for funding in the range of $3 million per project over two years.

- **Multidisciplinary research.** Although promoting research in all social sciences was included in the GDN agenda only in 2001, progress in broadening the disciplinary scope has already been significant in the networking activities, especially GDNet. Nevertheless, much still remains to be done. GDN will further improve the monitoring of its progress toward multidisciplinarity by building on the standardized reporting system; will continue to define themes for the competitions, projects, and conferences that encourage multidisciplinary research; and will make efforts to diversify the composition of the reviewers' panels and advisory and selection committees to fairly balance social-science disciplines.

- **Informing policy.** To strengthen its outreach to policymakers and better inform policy, GDN will rely on the ongoing *Bridging Research and Policy* project and will launch the Multidisciplinary and Intermediation Research (MIR) initiative in 2004. Within MIR, selected RNPs will engage local research organizations in addressing policy issues from a multidisciplinary perspective. The program of disseminating results and training researchers on how to make policymakers more aware of their research will commence in 2005. This program is expected to amount to $2–3 million in funding.

During its short four-year history, GDN has developed from a unit in the World Bank to an independent network of research and policy institutes that has successfully addressed the needs of researchers in the developing world and promoted their stature and influence. Building on these past successes, GDN's task for the future is to bring GDN-sponsored research to the attention of policymakers across the developing world and beyond.

I.   INTRODUCTION

The Global Development Network (GDN) was launched in December 1999 as a result of successful cooperation among the World Bank, the United Nations, a group of regional research networks, and a number of international development institutions. In July 2000 the network became a separate unit within the World Bank, and in March 2001 it was incorporated as an independent, not-for-profit organization. According to its mission statement, GDN, "a worldwide association of research and policy institutes, promotes the generation, sharing, and application to policy of multidisciplinary knowledge for the purpose of development."[1] It builds research capacity in developing and transition economies in order to generate and sustain effective—and home-grown—socioeconomic policies.

Relying on both quantitative and qualitative evidence, this evaluation report begins with a brief outline of GDN's history and examines progress in each of the three dimensions of GDN's activities—the generation, sharing, and application of knowledge.

II.   HISTORY

GDN was formally launched at the First Annual Global Development Conference in Bonn in December 1999 as an association of seven regional networks from the developing world, whose agendas were broadly consistent with GDN's mission (table 1).

Table 1 GDN's original regional network partners from developing and transition economies

Region	Network partners	Location
East Asia	East Asian Development Network (EADN)	Singapore
Eastern & Central Europe	Center for Economic Research and Graduate Education-Economics Institute (CERGE-EI)	Prague, Czech Republic
Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)	Economics Education and Research Consortium (EERC)	Moscow, Russia
Latin America and the Caribbean	Latin American and Caribbean Economic Association (LACEA)	Buenos Aires, Argentina
Middle East and North Africa	Economic Research Forum for Arab Countries, Iran, and Turkey (ERF)	Cairo, Egypt
South Asia	South Asia Network of Economic research Institutes (SANEI)	New Delhi, India
Sub-Saharan Africa	African Economic Research Consortium (AERC)	Nairobi, Kenya

The launching of GDN was preceded by a survey of 512 research institutes throughout the developing world, which revealed strong support for a global network focused on development research and its translation into policy. [2] The survey's response rate was 39.5 percent, with 202 research institutes participating in the survey. Nearly all of them rated an institution like GDN as

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[1] *Statement on the Governance of the Global Development Network,* final report of the Working Group, December 2000, available at www.gdnet.org/about_gdn/history/statement_gov.html.
[2] *Researching the Researchers: Establishing Priorities,* results of a survey undertaken under auspices of the International Economic Association and the World Bank for presentation at Bonn, December 5-8, 1999, available at www.gdnet.org/pdf2/surveys/researching_researchers.pdf.

"valuable" or "extremely valuable," while annual meetings, staff exchanges and fellowships, and information on funding opportunities emerged as the top-rated activities (table 2).

Table 2 Findings of the 1999 survey of research institutes

Issues	Percent of respondents
GDN rated as valuable or extremely valuable	99.5
Strong support for	
Annual meetings on global development	59.9
Staff exchanges and fellowships	58.4
Receiving information on funding opportunities	54.0

The Bonn conference saw the formation of a Working Group charged with proposing GDN's governance structure. This Group was comprised of members of the research community as well as representatives of national and multilateral development institutions.[3] The Group's deliberations—accompanied by a series of online consultations with GDN's prospective audiences—resulted in GDN's constitution, which was presented at the Second Annual Global Development Conference held in Tokyo in December 2000. The Statement on GDN's Governance articulated the network's objectives and functions; principles of governance; scope of activities; legal status; membership; and the functions, composition, and operation of the Governing Body and Secretariat.[4] At the same time, GDN's first Governing Body (GB) was formally introduced. It comprised members nominated and selected by the participating regional networks and international organizations and associations.[5]

The Tokyo conference also discussed the report of the High-Level Committee established in 2000 to study the existing supply of products similar to those supported by GDN.[6] Supplementing the findings of the survey of research institutes on the demand for products supported by GDN, this report revealed an increasing gap between the demand for policy-relevant research in the developing world and the supply of funds for this purpose, the need for

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[3] Lyn Squire who then directed GDN as a unit within the World Bank chaired this Working Group. The group members included: Bina Agarwal, International Economics Association; Kwesi Botchwey, Harvard University; Ishac Diwan, World Bank; Randall Filer, CERGE; Kaoru Hayashi, JBIC; Inge Kaul, United Nations Development Program; and Dani Rodrik, Harvard University. Two members of the Working Group—Agarwal and Kaul—became in 2000 members of the GDN Governing Body (GB), while Squire was appointed by the GB as Director of the GDN Secretariat after the network's separation from the World Bank. Filer and Hayashi assumed leadership of GDN's two regional network partners in Eastern and Central Europe and Japan, respectively.

[4] *Statement on the Governance of the Global Development Network.*

[5] The first GB consisted of thirteen members: Bina Agarwal representing the International Economics Association; Richard Cooper representing North America; Vittorio Corbo representing Latin America; Ulrich Hiemenz representing Western Europe; Lal Jayawardena representing South Asia; Inge Kaul representing the United Nations Development Programme; Jan Kmenta representing Eastern Europe; Kyung Tae Lee representing East Asia; Samir Makdisi representing the Middle East and North Africa; Guillermo Perry representing the World Bank; Victor Polterovich representing the CIS countries; Aki Sawyerr representing sub-Saharan Africa; and Shijiro Urata representing Japan. Lal Jayawardena was selected as the first chair.

[6] The High-Level Committee was chaired by Jo Ritzen, Vice President on Development Policy at the World Bank, and included the following members: Bob Solow (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the United States), Isher Ahluwalia (SANEI, India), Heba Handoussa (ERF, Egypt), Sam Wangwe (Economic and Social Research Foundation, Tanzania), Enric Banda (European Science Foundation, France), Sithembiso Nyoni (ORAP Global Partnership-Zenzele College, Zimbabwe), and Juan Antonio Morales, Central Bank of Bolivia.

extensive mentoring and monitoring of research progress to ensure quality, and the scarcity of institutions serving as intermediaries or brokers among donors, research institutes, and policymakers. At the same time, the report expressed a concern that much of the research agenda in the developing world is influenced by the developed world and emphasized the need for reducing brain drain by offering research opportunities to scholars in developing and transition economies.[7]

Drawing on the report of the High-Level Committee and discussions at the Bonn and Tokyo conferences, the GB endorsed the view that a network of researchers from the developing world should be independent of any single institution. Accordingly, GDN separated from the World Bank by incorporating as a not-for-profit organization in the State of Delaware (United States) in March 2001 and establishing its own office in Washington, DC. As indications of GDN's formal and actual independence, the network is self-governed, issued its first Annual Report in November 2002, commissions independent financial audits, and has taken measures to diversify its donor base.

Consistent with its mission of promoting research conducted in the developing world, GDN organized its first annual conference in a developing country in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in December 2001, which was followed by the conferences in Cairo, Egypt (January 2003) and New Delhi (January 2004). Currently preparations are under way for a conference in Dakar, Senegal (scheduled for January 2005).

The GDN Secretariat conducted a survey of the participants of its 2003 Cairo conference in order to monitor its beneficiaries' evolving priorities and receive their feedback.[8] The survey showed that the value attributed to GDN's activities basically matched the respondents' needs[9] (figure 1). Similarity in the two hierarchies of priorities has revealed GDN's ability to determine its beneficiaries' needs and offer relevant options for meeting them.

Figure 1 Results of the Cairo survey: respondents' needs and value attributed to GDN's activities

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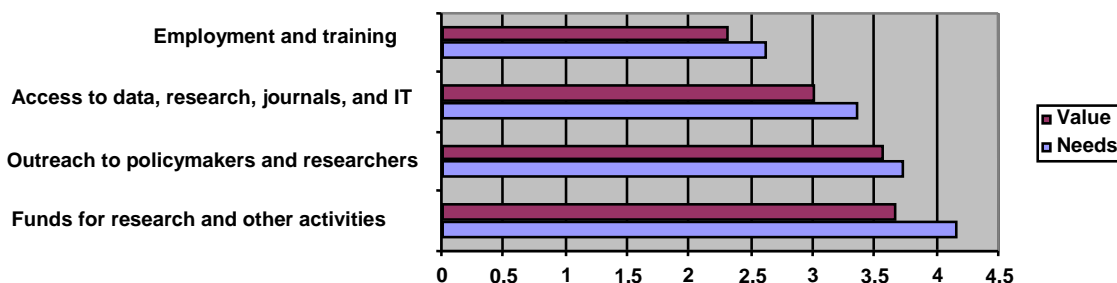
[7] *Donor Support for Policy Research in Developing Countries*, report of the High-Level Committee, November 21, 2000, 15.

[8] With a response rate of 32.6 percent, the survey resulted in 190 completed questionnaires, while the conference overall attracted 582 participants. See *Cairo Survey Findings*, available at www.gdnet.org/pdf/Fourth_Annual_Conference/Survey/Cairo_2003_Survey_Findings_FULL_TEXT.pdf.

[9] The respondents rated their needs and value of GDN's activities on the five-point Likert scale, where 1 stood for "not urgent/valuable" and 5 indicated "extremely urgent/valuable."

In addition to the survey of conference participants, the GDN Secretariat conducted a similar survey of the Regional Network Partners (RNPs) from transition and developing economies. The overall assessment of GDN on the part of the regional network heads was very favorable. Half of them gave GDN the highest score of 5, while the other half evaluated it as 4 on the five-point scale, where 1 indicated "not valuable" and 5 stood for "extremely valuable."

Since GDN's inception the number of its regional partnerships has increased. In 2000−2002 GDN inaugurated three regional networks in developed countries to provide expertise and share knowledge with researchers from developing countries: GDN-Japan with headquarters in Tokyo, the European Development Research Network (EUDN) with an office in Bonn, Germany, and GDN-North America with an office in Washington, DC, United States. The eleventh network, covering Australia, New Zealand, and the South Pacific, was launched under the name Oceania Development Network (ODN) in Suva, Fiji, in October 2003. ODN uniquely unites researchers from developing and developed countries to promote the development agenda.

In addition to expanding the geographic scope of its activities, GDN has been broadening its disciplinary scope. While the first partners to join GDN were regional networks focused on economics, it soon became apparent that policy does not know traditional academic boundaries, and that addressing policy puzzles requires multidisciplinary approaches. To introduce a multidisciplinary agenda, in May 2001 the GB endorsed a statement on the promotion of research in all social sciences. This statement reiterated that GDN's grant competitions are open to researchers from all disciplines of social science and that GDN's online initiatives have purposefully embraced all social sciences.[10] The statement further proposed measures to diversify GDN's governing structures—inviting a demographer and a political scientist to join the Governing Body, offering the International Political Science Association and the International Sociological Association the opportunity to nominate representatives to the Governing Body, and hiring a senior researcher from a social science other than economics as a member of the GDN Secretariat staff. It also suggested research topics that would encourage multidisciplinary research and urged the RNPs to take steps toward promoting research in all disciplines of social science.

In 2003, GDN revisited the question of its legal status. To reflect the truly global scope of GDN's activities and extend its contribution to international development, the GB voted in favor of changing GDN's status from a not-for-profit organization incorporated in the United States to an international organization. An online consultation with the GDN community indicated nearly 95 percent support for this change. It is expected that GDN's international organization charter—to be signed by sovereign states and public international organizations—will enhance the network's effectiveness, reduce its operating costs, and increase its financial support.

To be closer to its intended beneficiaries, the GB decided at the Tokyo meeting that the GDN Secretariat should relocate from Washington to a developing country. After a thorough review of five candidate cities, the GB decided in Cairo in January 2003 to relocate the Secretariat to New Delhi in 2005. Moving the headquarters to New Delhi is intended to demonstrate GDN's commitment to operating within and for the good of the developing world. In addition, the GB

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[10] *Statement of the [GDN] Governing Body on Promotion of Research in All Social Sciences*, May 2001, available at www.gdnet.org/pdf2/policy_docs/promotion_researchers_social_science.pdf, 1.

decided to maintain an already-existing office in Cairo responsible for GDNet, GDN's Internet initiative.[11]

GDN's 2003 expenses (table 3) reflect great importance attributed by the network to building research capacity and sharing knowledge. They also highlight the following five activities as GDN's core activities: the Regional Research Competitions, Global Research Projects, Annual Global Development Conferences, GDNet, and Global Development Awards and Medals Competitions. Notably, compared with the expenses for the core activities, indirect costs of the Secretariat are relatively small. It is the core activities that constitute the focus of this internal evaluation report.

Table 3 GDN's expenses (accrual basis), fiscal 2003 (thousands of U.S. dollars)

Categories	Expenses
Regional Research Competitions (including Education Research Initiative)*	2,925
Global Research Projects	2,565
Annual Global Development Conference	2,070
GDNet	923
Global Development Awards	685
Other programs	593
Secretariat (indirect costs)	345
Donor coordination	264
TOTAL	**10,370**

Source: Report of [GDN's] Independent Auditors, October 3, 2003

* *Note*: Education Research Initiative is an extension of the Regional Research Competitions. It builds on the established competitive mechanism to promote specifically research on education.

III.   BUILDING CAPACITY

GDN's major capacity-building activities include the following:

- The **Regional Research Competitions** are held every year by the RNPs to promote high-quality research in developing and transition economies by funding well-conceived, policy-relevant research projects. The competitions represent GDN's largest program to promote social science research in the developing world and foster new knowledge on development issues.

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[11] See more on GDN's history in Sarah Clarke and Lyn Squire, "Creating the Global Development Network: An Exercise in Institutional Theory and Practice," in Diane Stone and Simon Maxwell (eds.). *Bridging Research and Policy: A New Agenda in Global Development* (London: Routledge, forthcoming).

- The **Global Development Awards and Medals Competition** is the largest international annual contest for researchers on development. Awards for Outstanding Research on Development and Most Innovative Development Project include $100,000 cash payments to the winners and $10,000 to each of the two other finalists in each category. Medals carrying $10,000 and $5,000 prizes are awarded to authors of the best research papers on topics selected in accordance with the theme of each year's competition and GDN's annual conference. The Awards and Medals Competition helps discover and promote new talent, thereby increasing research capacity in the regional networks.

- The **Global Research Projects** are designed and implemented by GDN in cooperation with the RNPs to address the major challenges of development through the advancement of analytical methods and empirical cross-country, country, and other studies. Thus far, three projects have been implemented—*Explaining Growth, Understanding Reform,* and *Bridging Research and Policy*. These projects involve researchers in many different countries providing an excellent vehicle for cross-fertilization.

Each of these activities offers opportunities for professional development and advances knowledge through the mechanisms of competition or commissioning of research. Capacity building is augmented by knowledge sharing via interactions between the grantees and reviewers/advisors as well as collaboration within research teams. By providing a menu of activities, each of which emphasizes different capacity-building elements, GDN seeks to avoid the trap of relying on a single vehicle and thereby missing critical capacity-building ingredients.

Regional Research Competitions (RRCs)

The RRCs managed by the RNPs in developing and transition economies provide a model of how the diverse experiences of seven networks translate into best practices in capacity building. In contrast to most grant competitions, which place an emphasis on the application stage but then leave grantees to struggle alone, the RRCs offer extensive follow-up. The RRCs are based on both competition and cooperation: Competition—selection of the brightest—is complemented by cooperation—nurturing talents and helping them thrive. There is an effective system of mentoring grantees by experts, special training programs, and "quality assurance" mechanisms to improve research results. Reflecting an intensive learning process, the awarding of a grant is complemented by a thorough assessment of the research output. The same project is often discussed in several rounds at successive research workshops. Grantees receive extensive feedback from highly qualified reviewers from around the world as well as academically advanced advisory boards at all stages of their research—from the project's inception to its completion. Some RNPs favor continuous advice from the same mentors throughout the grant period.

While RRC grantees are constantly helped and encouraged in their research, they have the privilege of choosing the subject of their research and preferred methodology. In contrast to the widespread practice of following the donors' priorities and in accordance with the recommendation of the 2000 report of the High-Level Committee that the topics of research be specified by grantees rather than by donors, GDN adopted a decentralized model for the RRCs. The RNPs—not the donors or the GDN Secretariat—determine the competition themes.

Moreover, individual grantees or research teams select the topics of their projects within these broad themes and also choose the research methods. Thus, while taking advantage of external advice, the grantees enjoy a considerable degree of freedom.

The establishment of a reliable and effective grant-giving infrastructure constitutes yet another strength of the RRCs. Announcements for, as well as the results of, the RRCs are featured on each RNP's website. GDN requires all working papers from GDN-funded research to be posted on the Web. Each of the almost 490 research projects funded by GDN since 1999 has already produced or is expected to culminate in a working paper.

By February 2004 GDN had contributed more than $14 million to the RRCs, while the annual disbursements usually exceeded $2 million (figure 2). In 2003, funds allotted to each regional network for the RRCs ranged from $200,000 to $300,000 (table 4). Since 1999 the RRCs have funded almost 490 projects (table 5).

Launched in 2002, the Education Research Initiative (ERI)—a funding mechanism intended to promote research in education, including sponsorship of presentations on education at the RRC workshops—became another component of the capacity-building activities. ERI builds on the networks' experience in managing the RRCs to focus specifically on education research.

Figure 2 Funding for the RRCs and auxiliary capacity-building activities, fiscal 1998–2003* (thousands of U.S. dollars)
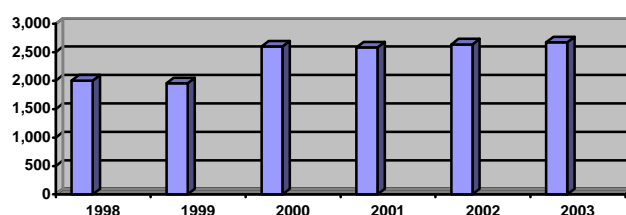
 * *Note:* GDN's fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30.

Table 4 Funding for the RRCs and auxiliary capacity-building activities by region, fiscal 2003 (thousands of U.S. dollars)

Region	RRCs	Education Research Initiative	Other
South Asia	300	–	–
Sub-Saharan Africa	300	–	–
East Asia	250	310	
Commonwealth of Independent States	250		20
Eastern and Central Europe	250	190	–
Middle East and North Africa	250		30
Latin America and Caribbean	200	320	–

Table 5 Numbers and amounts of RRC grants by network

Network	Number of grants	Amount (U.S. $)	Average grant amount (U.S. $)	Years reported
AERC	151	1,694,380	11,221	99-03
CERGE	75	1,010,606	13,475	01-03
EADN	103	1,067, 602	10,365	99-03
EERC	79	280,947	3,556	01-03
ERF	40	1,163,403	29,085	99-02
SANEI	41	1,481,584	36,136	99-03

Note: LACEA is not included in this table because the funds received from GDN are allocated to capacity-building activities other than the RRCs, such as covering participant expenses for the LACEA's conferences. This exception reflects the relatively greater research capacity in Latin America and the Caribbean region.

Interviews with RRC grantees conducted in Moscow in December 2002 and in Cairo in January 2003 (during the Cairo conference) reflected their appreciation of the program and its significant role in boosting their careers. The following statements express widely shared opinions:

- "Thanks to RRCs, young researchers benefit from the research fraternity in the early stages of their careers" (Mustafizur Rahman, Research Director, Centre for Policy Dialogue, Dhaka, Bangladesh).

- "The contribution of the RRC reviewers to the grantees' research is invaluable: We learn state-of-the-art methodologies from them. We get a sense of how to publish in respected scholarly journals. The advisors' guidance is very important for our professional growth" (Irina Tochitskaia, Senior Research Fellow, Institute of Economics, Belarus National Academy of Sciences, Minsk, Belarus).[12]

An independent evaluation of the RRCs conducted by Barbara Craig (Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio, United States) and Fernando Loayza (Servicios Ambientales, La Paz, Bolivia) in May–December 2001 was favorable. Based on interviews, electronic surveys, on-site visits, and a review of the RNPs' databases and resources, Craig and Loayza concluded that the RRCs are an effective tool for building research capacity and highlighted the standard RRC practices of competitive grant competitions as a mechanism to ensure the high quality of research and its policy relevance. The recommendations of this evaluation, which built on the successful experiences of the various networks, have provided a vehicle for the further improvement of this grant-giving operation.

The RRCs successfully strike a middle ground between an "affirmative action" approach toward the most needy audiences and a meritocracy—awarding grants on the basis of the research proposals' methodological soundness, originality, and expected project outcomes. Capacity building involves measures to address the under-representation of certain countries, regions within a country, institutions, female researchers, and researchers from disciplines other than

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[12] Global Development Network, *Building Research Capacity through Competition and Cooperation: Regional Research Competitions in the Developing World*, May 2003.

economics. The RRCs are also successful in balancing high academic standards of research with a consideration given to its policy implications. To bridge research and policy, the RNPs have taken steps to reach out to decisionmakers and affect public opinion. For example, ERF has pioneered studies on governance, employment, education, and gender, which have important policy implications for addressing poverty. Policy forums organized by the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC)—the partner in Sub-Saharan Africa—have contributed to initiatives on long-term financing for development and trade negotiations within Southern and Eastern Africa.

Moreover, some RNPs, such as SANEI, have been able to attract the attention of local policymakers due to the relatively high quality of the RRC research. For example, SANEI's 2003 conference held in Colombo was launched by Milinda Moragoda, Sri Lanka's Minister of Reform, Science, and Technology, who was willing not only to offer his remarks but also to engage in a discussion on the interface between economics and politics with the conference participants. Some of the SANEI Steering Committee members have served stints in the government, for example, Wahiduddin Mahmud from the University of Dhaka. In general, both SANEI reviewers and grantees often advise their governments. In addition, Rakesh Mohan, the former head of SANEI, has been recently appointed as Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India.

Finally, reflecting GDN's multidisciplinary agenda, the RRCs have made steady progress toward involving non-economists. In compliance with GDN contracts stipulating that "all grants provided by the Network [GDN] should be open to applicants and participants from all social sciences," many RNPs have made serious efforts to incorporate non-economists in the RRCs. As an indication of successful advertising in institutions representing all social sciences, applications to the 2002 round of RRCs held by CERGE-EI increased by 42 percent and from non-economists by a dramatic 158 percent. Out of 33 research grants awarded by CERGE-EI, five went to sociologists, three to political scientists, and seven to researchers from "other" non-economic disciplines of social science. Overall, non-economists received 45 percent of all CERGE-EI grants. For comparison, in the previous 2001 round of the RRCs, out of 27 CERGE-EI projects funded by GDN, 22 (81 percent) represented economics, while only two were classified as "multidisciplinary," one represented sociology, and the remaining two belonged to "other" disciplines of social science.

Similar to CERGE-EI, SANEI has made a conscientious effort to extend its disciplinary outreach by targeting non-economic institutes in its advertising, such as the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences (Calcutta, India), International Centre for Ethnic Studies (Colombo, Sri Lanka), and the Institute for Research and Development (Nagpur, India). EERC pursues multidisciplinary research through a panel on labor markets and social policy, which invites grant applications from researchers in all disciplines of social science. EADN has been particularly successful in its transformation from an economics-focused network to a multidisciplinary one. EADN has supported multidisciplinary research by funding projects on "border" topics between economics and other social sciences, such as the political economy of environmental protection and the policy implications of caring for elderly parents.

At its latest annual forum, held in October 2003, EADN made an explicit effort to involve participants from social sciences other than economics. Of the 57 participants in the forum, one-third represented other disciplines of social science and some had a multidisciplinary outlook in terms of their training and research. EADN's new regional projects launched in 2003—*East Asian Integration and Labor Migration*, *Urban Poverty and Social Safety Nets*, and *Political Transitions and Development*—are being implemented by multidisciplinary teams of researchers, involving 14 grants to economists, seven grants to political scientists, five grants to sociologists, and four grants classified as multidisciplinary.

The participation of senior GDN Secretariat staff as reviewers in grant competitions held by the RNPs and their attendance at regional conferences and workshops allow for learning about best practices and their dissemination among all partners in the network through brochures and other materials. The RRC brochure issued in 2003 benefited from the interviews with the RRC grantees from the seven RNPs. These interviews highlighted GDN's role in their professional development and scholarship. The GDN Secretariat staff members serve as intermediaries and repositories of valuable information, circulating their recommendations among all RNPs and the Governing Body. Evaluations of common activities, such as the independent evaluation of the RRCs, pursue the same goal of sharing best practices.

Global Development Awards and Medals Competition

The GDN Awards and Medals Competition is a mechanism for funding research that was established in 2000 by mutual cooperation between GDN and the Government of Japan. The main goal of the initiative is to unearth new research talent, give their research international exposure, and promote their professional careers. Since 2000, 2,007 scholars representing over 100 countries have participated, and approximately $2 million has been distributed in awards and travel to finalists and winners.

In general, the Awards and Medals Competition has met and exceeded its initial objectives. It has been an effective mechanism in encouraging high-quality research in developing and transition countries. The competition has succeeded in attracting researchers and development practitioners from every corner of the globe. It has rewarded and encouraged deserving, often little-known researchers, and has helped recipients attract other research funds. There has also been wide dissemination, in many different forms, of the output of the researchers and development experts involved in the competition. In particular, winners of Awards and Medals have experienced considerable success in translating their research into policy.

In contrast to the RRCs, prizes in this competition reward merit, irrespective of need. The selection process is extremely rigorous. Although details vary for each type of award, typically the selection process involves a three-tiered evaluation, at the end of which the winners are chosen at the Annual Global Development Conference. Evaluators for the Most Innovative Development Project award have consistently included prominent development practitioners such as World Bank President James Wolfensohn, Asian Development Bank President Tadao Chino, and Japan Bank for International Cooperation Institute Executive Director Keiichi Tango. Nobel Laureates Joseph Stiglitz and Amartya Sen have been among the evaluators for the Outstanding Research on Development award and the Research Medals. The rigor of the

selection process and the involvement of prominent scholars and institutions has ensured that the highest-quality submissions have been rewarded, while significantly enhancing the prestige of the awards.

One of the most attractive features of the competition is its geographical comprehensiveness. Table 6 provides information on the number of applicants participating each year since the competition's inception, as well as the number of countries represented. It should be noted that the decrease that occurred in 2001 relative to 2000 reflected a greater awareness of the high standards of the competition and the introduction of a new eligibility requirement that restricted it to residents of developing and transition economies only. Between 2001 and 2003, when the procedures for submission remained unchanged, the number of entries increased by one-third.

Table 6 Participants in the Global Development Awards and Medals Competition, 2000−2003

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003
Number of Applicants	784	351	402	470
Number of Countries Represented	93	73	80	78

Figure 3 provides information on the regional distribution of the competition finalists and winners between 2000 and 2003. As evident from the pie chart, GDN has been successful in attracting submissions from the entire developing world, including regions traditionally underrepresented in academia, such as Africa and the Middle East, which together account for more than 20 percent of the awardees.
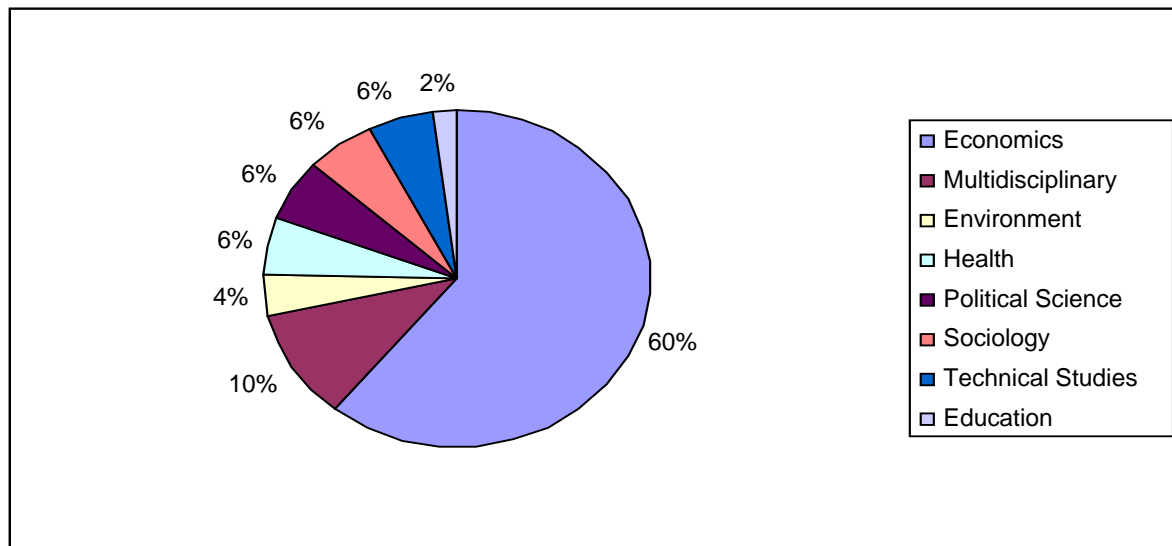
Figure 3 Regional distribution of finalists and winners in the Global Development Awards and Medals Competition, 2000−2003
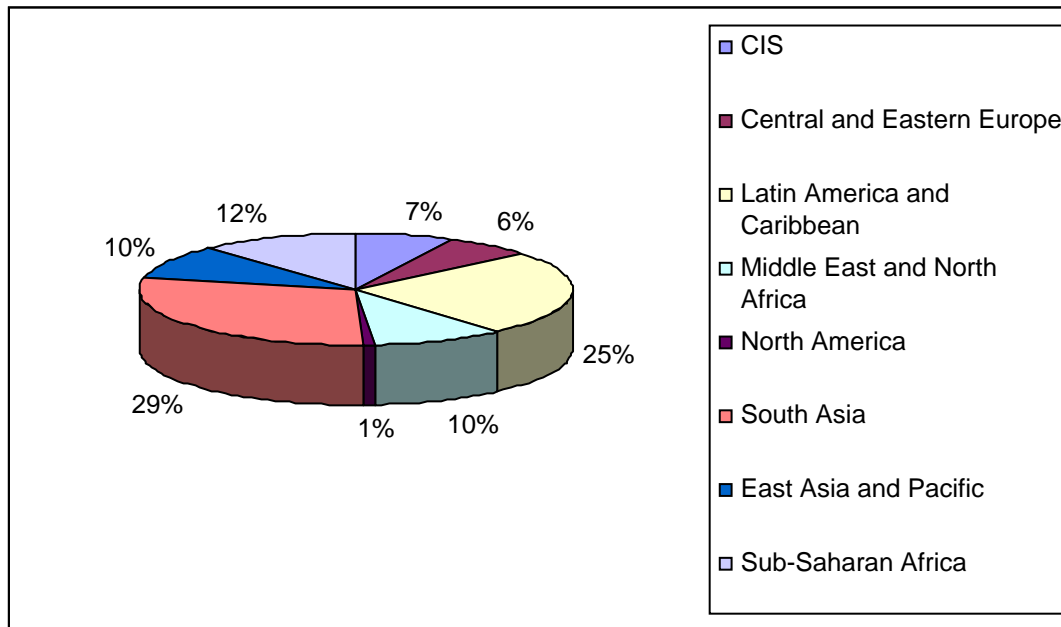
The diversity of the researchers who have joined the competition since 2000 should also be stressed. They have included many researchers affiliated with various social science departments in institutions of higher education, as well as many who occupy positions in regional agencies, governmental bureaus, non-governmental organizations, and policy-oriented think tanks. In addition, several have been consultants at multilateral organizations and members of advisory boards for national governments. For example, in the 2000 round of the competition, the first prize for Outstanding Research on Development was split between Jeanine Anderson, from the Catholic University of Peru, and Javier Escobal and Maximo Torero from GRADE (Group of Analysis for Development). In the 2001 round of the competition, Christian Arandel from Environmental Quality International was a finalist for the Outstanding Research Award. The same year, Ashima Goyal from the Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research received the second-place research medal. In the 2002 round of the competition, the Most Innovative Development Project Award went to Vera Cordeiro, a physician from Brazil, who established an association that helps ensure medical care for children from poor families (Associacao Saude Crianca Renascer).[13]

The announcement for the Awards and Medals Competition typically includes a clause to the effect that "under each topic, GDN welcomes submissions from all branches of the social sciences. Multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary submissions are particularly encouraged." Although the distribution among disciplines shown in figures 4 and 5 reflects approximate counts based on the researchers' affiliations and project titles, and economics remains the leading discipline, these figures nevertheless indicate that GDN has largely succeeded in encouraging multidisciplinary research through this competition.

Figure 4 Winners and finalists in the Awards and Medals Competition by discipline, 2000−2003

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[13] For a further description of award winners and their affiliations see
http://www.gdnet.org/activities/gdn_competitions/global_development_awards.

Figure 5 Discipline distribution of finalists and winners in all categories of the Awards and Medals Competition, 2000−2003
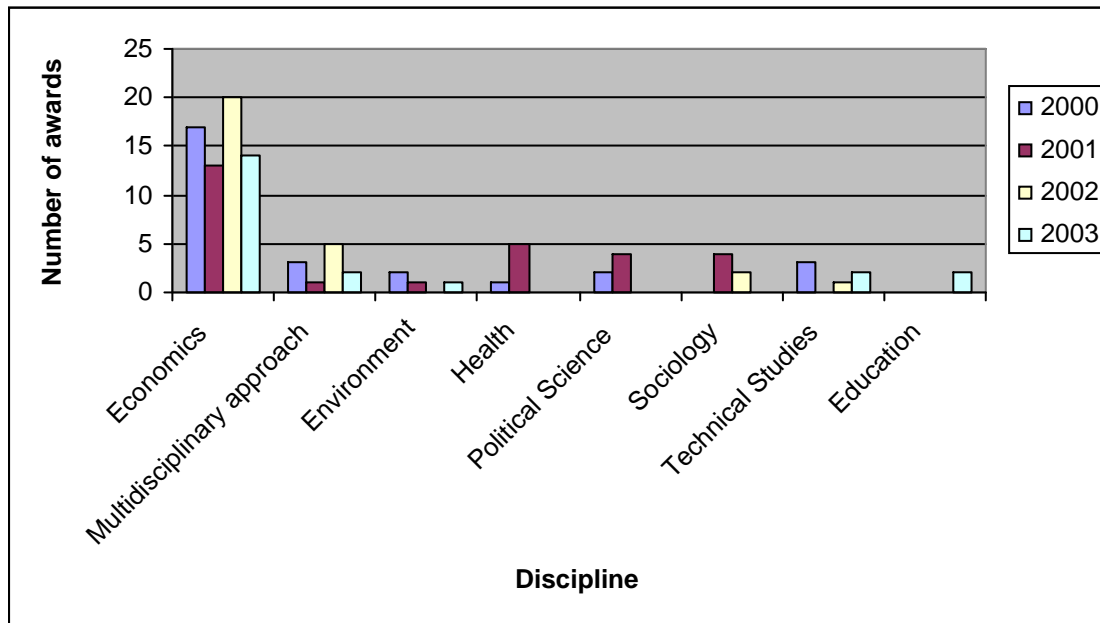
The funding of health, technical studies, and environmental projects reflects the unique nature of the Most Innovative Development Project competition. Here, participants are drawn typically from civic organizations, resulting in a relatively high proportion of engineers and environmentalists among finalists. The fourth round of competition in 2003, which was specifically oriented towards understanding reform, called for papers focusing on governance and the state, making the competition more attractive to political scientists.

GDN has been successfully addressing the challenge of broadening the disciplinary scope of the competition by deliberately targeting political scientists, anthropologists, sociologists, and other social scientists in GDN's advertising and marketing. Currently, the marketing database reflects outreach to 72 network contacts (NGOs, think tanks, and educational networks), 131 mailing lists, and 713 institutional contacts (e.g. political science associations, universities, and research foundations). In 2003 alone, a total of 45 political science networks, 161 social science networks, 255 centers for international studies, and 45 NGO networks were added to the marketing database (figure 6).

Figure 6 Additional marketing channels for the Awards and Medals Competitions added in 2003
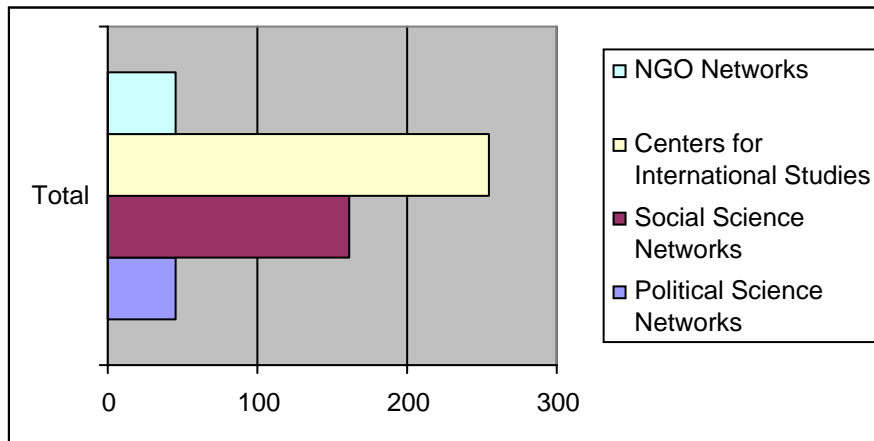
The announcements for the annual awards always contain a clause to the effect that "submissions that consider policy relevance are particularly welcome." In this respect, it is important to note that GDN finalists and winners have often been successful in directly exposing policymakers to their work. Most of them have presented their ideas to relevant stakeholders at seminars and workshops organized by their institutions, country governmental bureaus, and even international organizations. These efforts have had some very concrete outcomes in terms of policy decisions and implementation, as some of the awards winners have accepted government posts that directly affect development, while others have been prominently involved in legislative efforts in their home countries.

For example, apart from holding an advocacy workshop, Comfort Hassan's (Nigeria) institution produced a policy brief based on her work and has started distributing 500 copies among relevant stakeholders. Martin Medina presented his research in prominent international circles, such as the "International Seminar on Integrated and Sustainable Solid Waste Management in Latin America" held in Brazil (2000) and an international workshop of the Collaborative Working Group on Waste Management in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (2003). While Jeanine Anderson's large research initiative (Peru) is yet to be completed, she has already published a "popular" version in the book *Leonardo Prado: su historia, su palabra* (Leonardo Prado: his history, his word), which has been widely used in meetings with government representatives, particularly from the Ministry of Women and Social Development.

Besides reaching policymakers, the research of the competition winners and finalists also becomes known to the general public. It is particularly significant that the work of many GDN finalists has received attention from international media, such as the *New York Times*, *The Economist*, *Time* magazine, and top national newspapers, TV channels, and radio stations in their home countries, significantly raising the profile of both GDN and the researchers. For example, Sergei Guriev's (Russia) work was described in the *New York Times* in an article entitled "Economic Scene: Even Without Law, Contracts Can Be Enforced." *The Economist* recently published two articles on water privatization based on the research paper by Ernesto Schargrodsky and his team (Argentina), which won a research medal at GDN's 2002 Annual Conference.

In addition to being featured in the media, many of the projects that received GDN awards have been disseminated through academic workshops and conferences held at national and international levels. For example, Tatineni A. Bhavani (India) presented the results of her study on technological change in small enterprises in prominent academic environments, including the conference on "New Economy in Development" organized by the World Institute for Development Economics Research in Helsinki. Dominique Van De Walle and Dileni Gunewardena (Sri Lanka) had the opportunity to present their work on the sources of ethnic inequality in Vietnam at important forums, including the World Bank, Delta in Paris, and the University of Toulouse. Their results, moreover, were profiled in the *World Development Report, 2001*, and their methodology has been replicated in other World Bank research.

Many of the research papers submitted for the GDN competition have been published in peer-reviewed academic journals or in book form. For example, Juan Pablo Montero's (Chile) paper, "A Market-Based Environmental Policy: Experiment in Chile," was published in the *Journal of Law and Economics.* Boyan Belev's (Bulgaria) paper, "Privatization in Egypt and Tunisia: Liberal Outcomes and/or Liberal Policies," was published in *Mediterranean Politics.* Juan Camilo Cardenas' (Colombia) paper, "Real Wealth and Experimental Cooperation: Evidence from Field Experiments," was published in the *Journal of Development Economics.*

In addition to the cash prizes, all finalists in the Awards and Medals competition are invited to present their work at the Annual Global Development Conference. Through inviting the participants in the competition to the conference, GDN affords them the opportunity to share their research, to network with other scholars and policymakers, and in general assure their entry into a larger research community.

The presentations of the finalists constitute a highlight of the Conference, in fact supplying the Conference with one of its raisons d'être. The five topic areas for each year's research awards and medals are related to the topic of the given year's GDN Annual Conference. Despite differences in each year's specific topics, the underlying rationale for holding the Awards and Medals Competition is to address the imbalance in the distribution of knowledge between developed and developing countries, the non-transferability of much knowledge within the social sciences, and the relative absence of research efforts that adopt a multidisciplinary approach. Through the Awards and Medals Competition voices from developing countries are given a chance to be heard across geographic areas and various disciplines. Researchers have the opportunity to express their concerns and views about the issues which, after all, directly affect them.

Global Research Projects (GRPs)

The GRPs, designed and implemented by GDN in cooperation with the RNPs, have grown into one of the organization's major activities and the means of cross-fertilization of research generated in different parts of the world. The first GRP, *Explaining Growth*, whose goal is to explain the growth experiences of seven regions—East Asia, South Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Eastern and Central Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Middle East and North Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa—over the past 30–50 years, has resulted in 24 thematic papers in the project's first phase and 80 country studies in the project's second phase

and will produce volumes of country studies in five regions. Within this pioneering project, researchers from developing and transition economies partnered with internationally recognized development experts to compile the most comprehensive assessment of economic growth in existence. The implementation of the project included holding research workshops in all regions and a discussion of research findings at the Third Annual Global Development Conferences (Rio de Janeiro, 2001). As an example of the cross-fertilization effect, the joint EERC-CERGE-EI GRP on Explaining Growth in Eastern and Central Europe and the CIS countries created extensive opportunities for mutually beneficial cross-country learning.

A synthesis of the thematic papers was published in 2003 by Palgrave, in cooperation with the International Economic Association, under the title *Explaining Growth: A Global Research Project*. The Palgrave volume notes that the regional studies identify some of the major determinants of growth and, more importantly, help explain why countries with similar values for key variables have very different growth records by identifying the importance of micro-level behaviors, markets, and political economy factors. However, they do not capture the key interactions between the variables that are critical for sustainable growth. These can only be determined at the level of individual countries, a task being undertaken in the second phase of the project. Another significant contribution of the regional analyses conducted by GDN is the finding that countries accumulating higher levels of capital also had higher total factor productivity growth (or the growth of productivity of resources used in the economy). This finding can help resolve the debate over whether capital accumulation or total factor productivity drives the growth process. Moreover, the volume highlights some key policy lessons that emerged from the regional studies.

In 2003 an independent consultant, Fernando Loayza Careaga, conducted an impact assessment among participants of the first phase of the *Explaining Growth* project. The exercise revealed the effectiveness of partnerships between economists from developed and developing/transition economies in delivering regional thematic reviews that surveyed key regional issues on the spheres of sources and determinants of aggregate growth, the influence of markets on growth, the microeconomics of growth, and the political economy of growth. According to the majority of authors and users, the papers written in the context of the GRP offered useful insights to the literature on growth. The International Economics Association also favorably evaluated this GRP's contributions to the literature on growth.

The GRP's impact on capacity building across developing/transition economies was also significant. Particularly in the GRP's second phase, researchers from the developing world gained international exposure at the regional and global levels. They valued highly this exchange of experiences and the constructive feedback received in the workshops and conferences. Indeed, they preferred the workshops and conferences to standard peer reviews. In addition, most researchers from the developing world acknowledged that participating in the project has enhanced significantly the quality of their teaching.

Research partnerships were also instrumental in enhancing the capacity-building component of the GRP. The most widespread type of partnership in the developing world involved linking a national senior researcher experienced in historical and institutional issues with a national junior researcher highly competent in modern economic analysis. The evaluation showed important

levels of joint learning arising from this type of partnership. These partnerships were further enhanced or complemented by support received from resource persons acting as reviewers.

Understanding Reform, the second GRP, was launched in December 2001 and is now coordinated by José María Fanelli of Centro de Estudios de Estado y Sociedad, Buenos Aires, Argentina. The objective of the research is to develop and systematize the body of knowledge available for the design and implementation of future reform efforts by learning from past experiences. This general goal has been pursued by raising three central questions: Why do countries reform? Which factors shape reform design and implementation? And what were the outcomes of reforms? Given this focus, the project has a strong emphasis on institutional analysis and political economy, making it well suited for multidisciplinary research.

Similarly to the project on *Explaining Growth, Understanding Reform* is organized in two phases. During the first phase, ten background papers were prepared on topics of general importance to understanding reform. These papers provided guidelines to the authors of the subsequent country studies by highlighting key issues, identifying unexplored themes, and suggesting ways to address yet-unresolved questions. In an interesting departure from the usual pattern, most thematic papers were prepared by teams of two or three researchers from different disciplines. For example, economists from Croatia and Macedonia worked with a political scientist from Bulgaria on the paper titled "The State, Public Goods, and Reform." First drafts of all ten papers were reviewed at a special workshop held during the Cairo 2003 conference and are now available on GDN's website.

At the Cairo workshop, the terms of reference for the country studies were also finalized. A call for proposals resulted in around 300 submissions. This response attests to the strong interest among researchers worldwide in collaborative development studies. First drafts of the 30 selected country studies have now been completed and underwent peer review at a two-day workshop held in conjunction with the Delhi 2004 conference. All the authors represent developing or transition economies. Building on the experience of the first GRP, an infrastructure for assisting the country-studies authors in revising their research and papers was instituted: GDN created an electronic library of literature on reform and negotiated a contract with J-STOR—an electronic archive of leading scholarly journals in various disciplines—to expand access to academic publications. In addition, project researchers now have access to electronic help desks, manned by established scholars of global recognition.

All GRPs share important characteristics for capacity building. They involve established researchers mentoring their younger counterparts. They provide opportunities for cross-country comparisons and sharing best practices in conducting and managing research. And, apart from addressing academic questions, they consider the policy implications of GDN-funded research. These characteristics apply to GDN's third GRP, *Bridging Research and Policy*, as much as they apply to *Explaining Growth* and *Understanding Reform*. However, the *Bridging Research and Policy* project has a specific focus on policy and therefore will be discussed in section V on informing policy.

IV.   SHARING KNOWLEDGE

The three major channels of networking and sharing knowledge within GDN are the following:

- **Annual Global Development Conferences**, which provide a global forum for exchanging ideas on sustainable development and poverty alleviation. Around 500 participants annually include researchers, government officials, representatives of international organizations, and research sponsors. Five conferences have been held since GDN's inception: Bonn (1999), Tokyo (2000), Rio de Janeiro (2001), Cairo (2003), and New Delhi (2004).
- **GDNet**—a series of online information initiatives developed by GDN to support researchers and research institutes in developing and transition economies. GDNet serves as the electronic voice of GDN and is a key tool in its capacity-building and communication efforts.
- **Annual conferences, research workshops, and online means of communication** managed by the RNPs. These are the equivalents of the Annual Global Development Conferences and GDNet at the regional level.

Annual Global Development Conferences

The most important GDN event is the Annual Global Development Conference (see table 7 for the list of conferences), which brings together the Network's diverse constituencies and highlights its achievements. The paths of the following groups cross at this conference:

- Finalists of GDN's Global Development Awards and Medals Competitions.
- RRC grantees.
- Participants of the GRPs.
- Leading researchers from 11 networks who serve as session chairs, presenters, and discussants.
- Representatives of the RNPs, including network heads and coordinators.
- Representatives of GDN's institutional partners, such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and United Nations Development Programme.
- Policymakers and representatives of civic organizations and business invited as speakers and attendees.
- Members of the Governing Body, GDN Secretariat staff, and GDNet team.
- Donors.

Table 7 Annual Global Development Conferences

Theme	Date	Location	Number of participants	Number of countries
Understanding Reform	January 2004	New Delhi, India	673	102
Globalization and Equity	January 2003	Cairo, Egypt	596	104
Blending Local and Global Knowledge	December 2001	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	400	95
Beyond Economics: Multidisciplinary Approaches to Development	December 2000	Tokyo, Japan	464	73
Bridging Knowledge and Policy	December 1999	Bonn, Germany	532	100

A three-day conference is scheduled annually for December or January, either preceded or followed by several research workshops. In addition to the GRP topics, these workshops also raise other themes of interest to the GDN community. Some specific requests from leading development researchers to hold an event are also accommodated. Prior to the Cairo conference, the five research workshops—*Understanding Reform, Bridging Research and Policy, Education for Development, Development Effectiveness of Rich Countries' Policies,* and *Impact Assessment Study of Research Partnerships* attracted 125 participants. To fully take advantage of the opportunity to reach important audiences within the framework of a GDN event, the number of workshops held in Delhi was increased to seven. The two GDN-sponsored workshops on the GRPs, *Understanding Reform* and *Bridging Research and Policy*, were complemented by the following five workshops sponsored by other organizations:

- *Impact of Rich Countries' Policies on Poor Counties' Development*
- *Moving out of Poverty*
- *Tackling Absenteeism of Teachers and Medical Personnel*
- *Evaluating Partnerships*
- *Security and Development*

The conference program is focused on a particular theme (table 7) and includes both plenary and parallel (break-out) sessions involving researchers and policymakers from both the developing and developed worlds. The plenary sessions feature prominent researchers, including Nobel Laureates Douglass North (Tokyo, 2000) and Amartya Sen (New Delhi, 2004), and leading policymakers, such as Fernando Henrique Cardoso, then President of Brazil (Rio de Janeiro, 2001), Atef Ebeid, Prime Minister of Egypt (Cairo, 2003), Ernesto Zedillo, former President of Mexico (Cairo, 2003), and Grzegorz W. Kolodko, former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance of Poland (New Delhi, 2004). The foremost intention, however, is to showcase development research generated in developing and transition economies. The major conference highlights include presentations of the finalists of GDN's Global Development Awards and Medals Competitions, discussions of the GRPs, policymakers' roundtables, and sessions organized by GDN's regional and institutional partners. Meetings of the GDN Governing Body and donors are also held within the framework of the conference.

Programmatic decisions about GDN's conferences and workshops are made by the Governing Body after face-to-face and online discussions among its members and consultations with the GDN community and, in particular, the RNPs. The RNPs also play an important role in determining the agenda of GDN events by suggesting topics, organizing sessions, and nominating speakers, discussants, and general participants.

In addition to helping ensure the coherence of GDN's activities and providing a forum for sharing research findings and management practices, the Annual Global Development Conference is also an important marketing and fundraising event. It offers an opportunity to meet with donors and convey to them the results of their investment at the special donors' meeting. It is an excellent occasion to issue press releases and opinion pieces, hold press conferences, and profile GDN in the media. GDN's annual conferences have reached not only the research and policymaking communities but have also attracted the attention of the general public. Ideas

expressed at the first four conferences have culminated in two overview books,[14] policy briefs,[15] and numerous articles in print media.[16] Six papers by presenters at the Fourth Annual Global Development Conference are slotted to be published in 2004 by Edward Elgar Publishing, Ltd. in the volume *Globalization and Equity: Perspectives from the Developing World*. Several papers by the finalists of the Medals Competition on globalization and equity have been proposed for publication in the scholarly journal *World Development*. Broad media coverage of the annual conferences signals that they have developed into a major knowledge-sharing, consensus-building, and public relations event, which should also have a policy impact.

In a survey of the Cairo conference participants, the respondents rated GDN's annual conference as the most valuable among GDN's activities: It received a mean score of 4.5 on the five-point scale, where 1 indicated "not valuable" and 5 stood for "extremely valuable." In addition to appreciation of the conference's substantive value, participants also rated the organization of the conferences very highly. The variations in this opinion were relatively small. Excluding non-response cases, 48.7 percent of the respondents considered GDN's annual conferences "extremely valuable" and no respondent chose the option of "not valuable."[17]

As a reflection of the appeal of GDN's annual conferences, the Secretariat receives unsolicited proposals from the governments of various developing and transition countries to host future conferences. For example, such proposals have been received from Peking University and the Beijing Municipal Government as well as the Leontief Center (St. Petersburg, Russia) and the St. Petersburg Governor. Offering their logistical and financial assistance, governments and local research institutions view GDN's events as a stimulus for the development of social science research and as an opportunity to learn from shared knowledge and expertise. Similarly, GDN has been receiving an increasing number of requests to hold research workshops and special sessions within the conference framework, reflecting recognition of the conference as a major forum on development. In addition to the seven workshops, the Delhi conference accommodated three special sessions:

- *Understanding Content Management Systems* (sponsored by GDNet).
- *Labor Market Issues in Asia in a Global Economy* (Asian Development Bank).
- *Global Governance Initiative* (Brookings Institution, United States).

Consistent with GDN's principles of openness and inclusiveness, participants in GDN's annual conferences are selected in an open manner—often through the Global Development Awards and Medals Competitions or regional research and other competitions. Three finalists in each of the Awards Competitions categories—Outstanding Research on Development and Most Innovative

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[14] Diane Stone (ed.), *Banking on Knowledge: The Genesis of the Global Development Network* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000); Stone and Simon Maxwell (eds.), *Bridging Research and Policy: A New Agenda in Global Development* (London and New York: Routledge, forthcoming).

[15] For example, a policy brief, "Cairo Consensus: Reforms as a Path to Equitable Globalization," is slotted to be published in *Global Social Policy*.

[16] For example, the Fourth Annual Global Development Conference received wide coverage in the local Egyptian media. See the list of GDN press releases, articles (both in Arabic and English) that were published in the Egyptian newspapers and magazines, and Internet coverage, including that by Yahoo news at http://www.gdnet.org/activities/annual_conferences/fourth_annual_conference/press_releases.

[17] *Cairo Survey Findings.*

Development Project—are invited to present their projects at the plenary sessions, while five finalists in each of the five Medals Competition categories[18] deliver their research papers at the parallel (break-out) sessions. RRC grantees constitute another category of conference attendees. The selection and nomination process managed by the RNPs favors promising researchers from all disciplines of social science who are involved in GDN-funded activities, such as RRCs and GRPs.

Since 2002, GDN has also held an open competition for students interested in participating in the annual conference. Last year, the GDN Secretariat received 157 applications and invited 12 students from developing and transition economies to the Cairo 2003 conference. Due to the excellent completion of their Cairo assignments, six students from this group were awarded a grant to attend the 2004 conference in New Delhi. An additional eight students were selected from a group of 42 applicants to the 2003 open competition. Furthermore, following a suggestion by the Governing Body, in May 2003 the GDN Secretariat announced an open call for proposals of workshops that are traditionally held prior to the annual conference. This call offered an extra competitive channel for determining the topics and participants in the conference. As a result, one workshop—focused on the study of absenteeism of teachers and medical personnel in seven developing countries, conducted by Indonesia's SMERU Research Institute—was selected.

Open competition, however, is not the only means of generating a conference participants' list. Reflecting the high value that GDN attributes to partnerships, the RNPs and GDN's institutional partners—such as the United Nations University and the United Nations Development Programme —have much leverage in organizing sessions and suggesting candidates for session chairs, presenters, and discussants. GDN primarily funds participants from developing and transition economies, while attendees from the developed countries are expected to cover their own expenses.

Participants in the Fourth Annual Global Development Conference held in Cairo in January 2003 included representatives from 104 countries and various disciplines of social science— economics, political science, sociology, public policy, and business. While 76.7 percent of the respondents in the survey conducted at the Cairo Conference were economists, 10.2 percent, defined themselves as having "multidisciplinary" background, and 7.8 percent were political scientists.[19] Disciplines of social science other than economics were even better represented among the participants in the Fifth Annual Global Development Conference held in New Delhi in January 2004. According to the registration data, economists accounted for only 53.0 percent, while 13.5 percent of the participants defined themselves as "multidisciplinary," 6.4 percent were political scientists, 5.3 percent indicated themselves as experts in public policy, and 5.0 percent were sociologists. The conference participants' composition from the point of view of age and region shown in figures 7 and 8 also reveals a high degree of diversification.

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[18] Reflecting subthemes of the conference theme, these categories vary from one conference to another. For example, the theme of the Fourth Global Development Conference (Cairo, January 2003) was "Globalization and equity," while the five subthemes were the following: (1) growth, inequality, and poverty; (2) trade and foreign direct investment; (3) education, knowledge, and technology; (4) financial markets; and (5) health, environment, and development.

[19] *Cairo Survey Findings*.

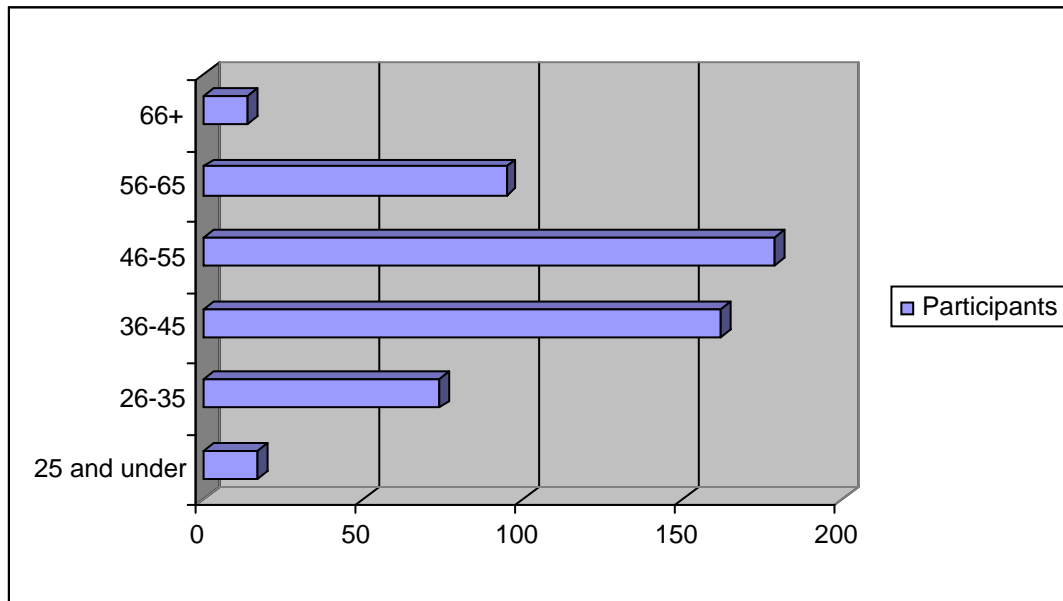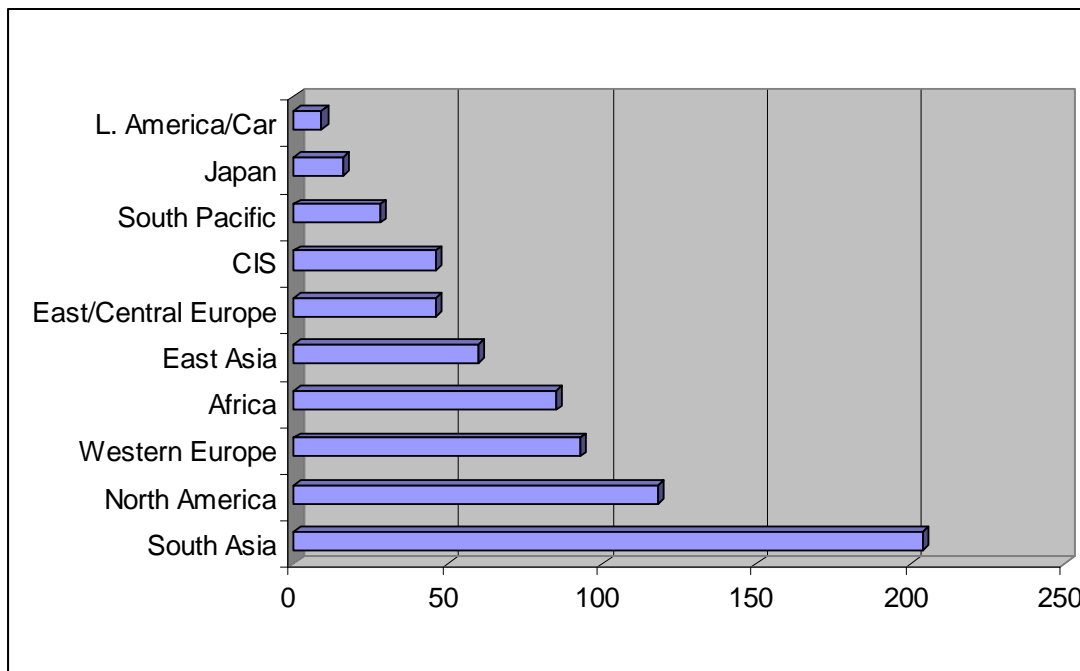Figure 7 Age composition of the Delhi conference participants

Figure 8 Representation of regions among the Delhi conference participants

GDNet

The launching of GDNet—a series of online information initiatives—was inspired by the 1999 survey of research institutes in the developing world, which highlighted strong support by researchers for low-cost electronic services, such as offering access to databases, scholarly

journals, and a newsletter.[20] Consistent with GDN's mission, GDNet has three primary objectives:

- To enable institutes and researchers in developing countries to communicate their knowledge more effectively to others by linking them into a global network and showcasing their work.
- To help build the dissemination capacity of research institutes by providing training, professional support and other services to upgrade skills in knowledge management and the provision of new Internet-based services.
- To provide social science researchers in developing countries with access to resources enabling them to improve their research.

Also consistent with GDN's mission and the principle of the plurality of represented disciplines, the May 2001 statement of the GDN Governing Body on promoting research in all social sciences reiterated that GDNet has purposefully embraced all social sciences.[21]

GDNet provides a portal to the social science research produced in developing and transition economies, enhances communication capacity within the developing world, and helps translate home-grown expertise into local policies. GDN's website, www.gdnet.org, is the locus of a community of researchers and organizations registered with GDN, offering a suite of information services and tools. GDNet distributes a monthly email newsletter, *GDN news,* and an e-bulletin, *GDNet research in focus,* to more than 13,000 subscribers, keeping them up to date on the latest news and research.

GDNet has been realizing its objectives within a broad disciplinary scope in partnership with the UK Institute of Development Studies (IDS) and together with regional partners based in developing countries. From the outset, the core implementation team composed of staff from GDN and IDS has adopted a participatory, demand-driven approach toward the regional partners and benefited from proven skills and experience—factors that have been critical for the initiative's success.

Rich in content, GDN's website supports GDN's activities through communicating the latest news from GDN and the RNPs, highlighting new research from GDN's global projects and facilitating access to funding sources. In addition to the significant role played by GDNet in ensuring GDN's openness and transparency, the electronic media provides tremendous opportunities for sharing knowledge. Through facilitating e-discussions on GRPs and everyday matters of GDN's operation, GDNet offers a low-cost means of networking for tens of thousands of GDN-registered members. Accessible from GDN's website, the Knowledge Base brings together social science knowledge from developing countries in one easily searchable database. Researchers can search linked directories of scholarly papers, researchers, as well as research and policy institutes. The Knowledge Base contains almost 7,500 summaries of recent publications and working papers and over 2,500 organizational profiles as well as 3,000 researcher profiles (figure 9). It is rapidly emerging as the main depository of social science research conducted in the developing world.

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[20] *Researching the Researchers: Establishing Priorities.*
[21] *Statement of the [GDN] Governing Body on Promotion of Research in All Social Sciences*, 1.

Furthermore, GDNet is in the process of operationalizing the Regional Windows initiative, intended to communicate region-specific knowledge generated by the local social science community to inform both national and international policy debates. Four Regional Windows—produced by coordinators based in regional research institutes—are currently in operation: the Middle East and North Africa window, the Sub-Saharan Africa window, the Central and Eastern Europe window, and the Commonwealth of Independent States window. By disseminating locally generated research and showcasing regional researchers, the Regional Windows provide a platform to facilitate networking in the regions and offer the local social science research community a window to the world.

To help build dissemination capacity, GDNet has implemented a series of workshops to provide training in knowledge management and research dissemination. One such workshop was held in March 2001 ("A Knowledge and Capacity Sharing Workshop"), and another was held in 2002 ("GDNet Knowledge Management Workshop 2002"). The program of training and skills building for information managers from the developing world should enhance research-related communication worldwide.

Figure 9 Knowledge Base resources, January 2003−January 2004
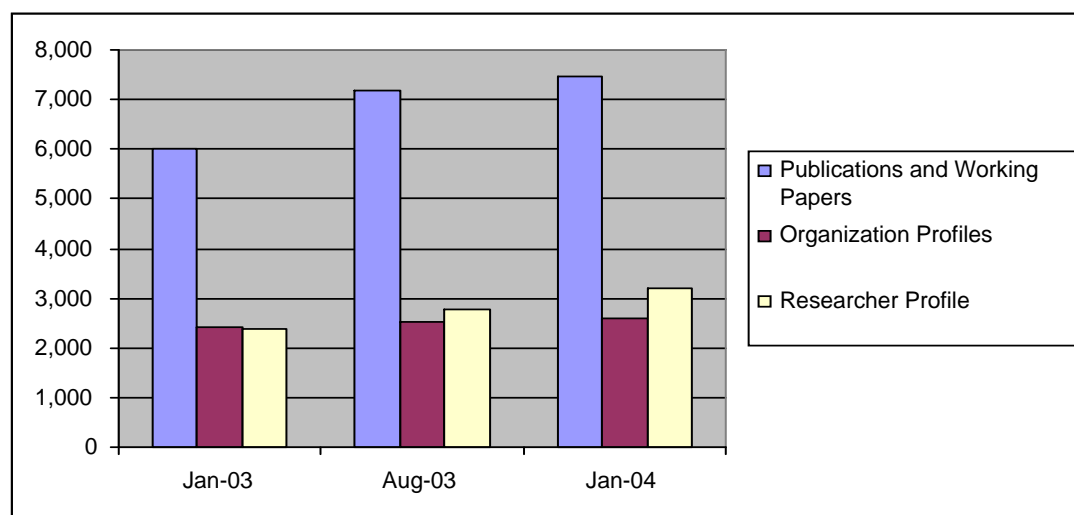
Moreover, through the GDNet-facilitated Data Initiative, researchers in low- and middle-income countries obtain access to datasets that should improve the quality of their research. The GDN Data Initiative aims to bridge the gaps separating data producers, researchers, and policymakers. Implemented in partnership with the World Bank's Development Data Group, the initiative takes advantage of the World Bank's existing databases and tools to help promote access to data, build statistical capacity, and to transfer the Data Initiative to country and regional ownership.
Finally and most importantly, GDNet has generated a significant response from the global development research community, as shown in figures 9 and 10. For example, between January 2003 and January 2004, the number of publications and working papers in the Knowledge Base increased by 24 percent (figure 9) and the hits on the GDN website by 66 percent (figure 10).

Figure 10 GDN's website traffic, January 2003−January 2004
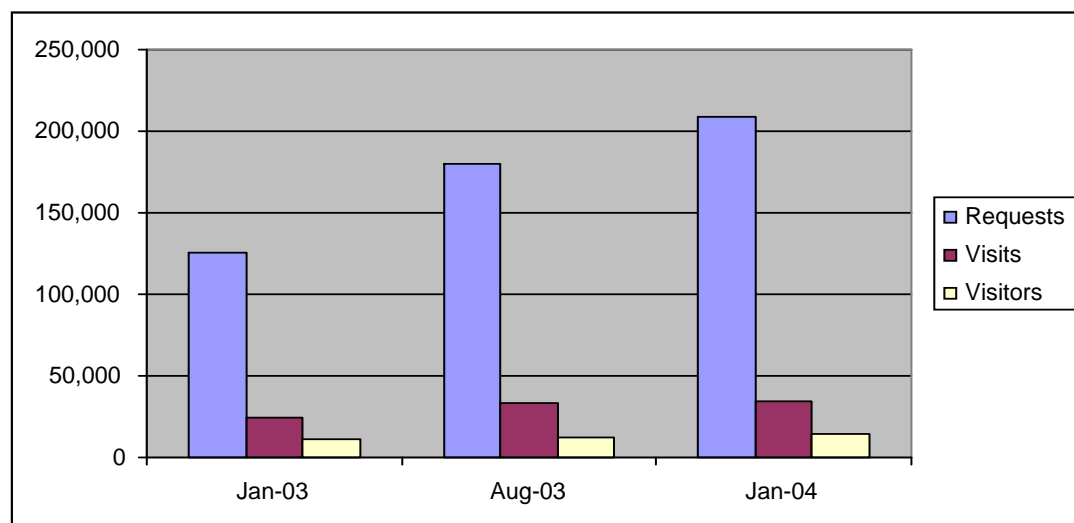
Note: "Number of requests" refers to the number of hits the website receives through online searches as opposed to direct visits.

As revealed by the survey of the Cairo conference participants, the majority of the visitors to GDN's website evaluated its information highly on the five-point scale, where 1 indicated "not valuable" and 5 stood for "extremely valuable."[22] Judging by the ratings' mean scores, the most valued information was the announcements of competitions (4.25) and conferences/workshops (4.20), followed by publications and working papers placed on the web (4.00) and the Funding Opportunities newsletter (3.99). In response to the question, "How can we make GDN's website more useful to you?" one of the most frequent statements was an expression of satisfaction with the current website.

However, the Cairo survey also suggested a clear need for simpler marketing messages to raise awareness of the benefits offered to those registered with GDN. Responding to this finding, the GDNet team intensified its marketing campaign in 2003. In particular, the circulation of the Cairo survey findings was used as an opportunity to distribute an electronic flyer summarizing the range of benefits that become available as a result of creating an individual profile on GDN's Knowledge Base. Upon completing a major site redesign in July 2003, a series of concise marketing messages was initiated, some proving very effective. For example, registration of new researcher profiles from the developing world increased dramatically in November as a result of launching the new, free online journals, access to which has been made available through GDN-North America and Project MUSE. Moreover, participants of the Fifth Global Development Conference were invited to subscribe to GDN's newsletter when registering for the conference. As a result of better advertising, the Knowledge Base has already expanded significantly in recent months. Notably, over 75 percent of new profile registrations were those of researchers based in developing and transition economies.

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[22] *Cairo Survey Findings.*

Thanks to the commitment of the government of Egypt, the host of the GDN Cairo conference, to provide rent subsidies for the GDNet office in Cairo, the GDNet team will move to its new home in June 2004. Egypt's financial contribution to GDNet will include technical assistance from the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology towards the migration of the GDNet portable systems platform from IDS, where it is currently hosted, to Cairo. The estimated cost of this assistance is $120,000 over a three-year period. The office will be located in Cairo's Smart Village—the Egyptian equivalent of the Silicon Valley.

Networking at the regional level

GDN's network framework facilitates sharing knowledge and best practices among affiliated regional partners, piloting experimental approaches, and fine-tuning operational models in order to adapt them in various contexts. In addition to GDN's annual conferences, regional conferences and workshops organized by the RNPs are effective means of networking and exchanging research programs and findings. Interregional sessions at the 2004 Delhi conference, which were organized jointly by several RNPs, should further enhance the cross-fertilization effect. Similarly, GRPs and regional research projects involving more than one RNP create extensive opportunities for mutually beneficial learning. Annual business meetings of the Governing Body, the GDN Secretariat staff, and the heads of the RNPs at GDN's annual conferences provide further opportunities to discuss the achievements of each unit in the network, summarize lessons learned from the most productive experiences, and suggest the best models of operation. The intensity of formal and informal exchanges, driven by the goal of mutual enrichment, characterizes GDN as an effective networking organization.

GDN constantly fine tunes its strategy in online and face-to-face consultations with its members. Particularly extensive contacts are maintained between the RNPs, the Governing Body, and the GDN Secretariat. During the Fifth Annual Global Development Conference (Delhi, January 2004), a special session titled "Sharing best practices" brought together the heads and coordinators of the RNPs and GDN Secretariat staff. This session allowed participants to discuss GDN's progress in 2003 and distinguish the most promising approaches to improving GDN's activities.

All of the RNPs have their own websites, which are mutually connected through GDN's website. Although regional websites vary in their quality, some of them are very advanced. For example, EERC has developed an interface that allows reviewers in the grant competitions to easily access applications, submit their comments, discuss papers online, select awardees, and approve the selection without meeting face-to-face with other members of the selection committee. As a result of the sophisticated means of sharing knowledge, the RNPs have accumulated valuable know-how on handling grant competitions as well as extensive databases of research and researcher profiles. This experience enables them to become depositories of development research conducted by researchers from the developing world.

V.   INFORMING POLICY

"Applying multidisciplinary knowledge on development to policy" is an important part of GDN's mission. The overwhelming majority of respondents in the original 1999 survey of 512 research institutes expressed their interest in influencing policy: On the seven-point scale where 1 represented "no interest at all" and 7 stood for "extreme interest," 74.3 percent of the respondents marked 5 or higher, while 23.6 percent indicated a 7.[23] Consistent with GDN's mission, the objectives of most of the RNPs in developing and transition economies—AERC, EERC, CERGE-EI, and EADN—include promotion of policy-oriented research on development issues. LACEA encourages interactions between policymakers and researchers. Because of GDN's decentralized network structure and the relative autonomy of the RNPs, the findings of regional research are addressed directly to local policymakers.

The 2000 report of the High-Level Committee revealed an interesting puzzle: Despite the donors' clear interest in policy-relevant research, "the amount of funding for policy-focused knowledge initiatives is only about two percent of the total development budget of donors."[24] Based on the analysis of funding for research and research-related activities in 1998−99 for 20 institutions, the committee came to the conclusion that the primary channeling of funds to technological fields (76 percent of all funds), with little support of policy-focused research, is due to the "difficulty in assessing the success of such programs, with respect to both quality and policy impact."[25]

A preference for promoting home-grown policies—in contrast to policies based on external advice offered by the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund—is shared by both the GDN community and donors, who favor initiatives directly related to well-being over less practical knowledge-building exercises. Some participants at the donors' 2000 meeting, which represented an important landmark in GDN's history, specifically expressed their support for linking researchers and policymakers and incorporating development practitioners in GDN's activities.[26] Confirming this attitude, the major GRP focused on informing policy—the *Bridging Research and Policy* project—has been well received by donors.

GDN's third global project, *Bridging Research and Policy,* launched in 2002, pursues the following goals:

- To increase awareness among policymakers of the value of research.
- To establish an international coalition interested in collaborating to improve linkages between research and policy.
- To enhance understanding of how to improve the impact of research.
- To generate lessons, recommendations, and practical tools and produce a range of information materials for use in guidelines and training.

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[23] *Researching the Researchers: Establishing Priorities.*
[24] *Donor Support for Policy Research in Developing Countries*, 15.
[25] *Ibid.*, 5.
[26] *Global Development Network: Summary of Interim Donors' Meeting*, Brussels, Belgium, June 7, 2000, available at www.gdnet.org/pdf/InterimDonorsMeetingReport.pdf.

The *Bridging Research and Policy* project is also consistent with the observation of the High-Level Committee about the "need for more work on both measurement of policy impact and the types and strategies of dissemination that are and are not working in different cultural, institutional, and political settings."[27] It addresses this need by enhancing the understanding of how the impact of research can be improved, including deliberate actions to expand researchers' outreach to policymakers.

During the first phase of project implementation (the year 2002), participants developed a framework for analysis, collected and analyzed 50 summary case studies of research-policy links from around the developing world, undertook preliminary surveys of policymakers and researchers, and designed a Research and Policy website (www.gdnet.org/rapnet). Work during the first phase confirmed the complexity of research-policy links in developing countries and the importance of a systematic approach. Research revealed the major importance of the following four issues: 1) political and institutional context, 2) the quality of research evidence (its relevance and credibility), 3) the nature of the relationships between researchers and policymakers, and 4) external influences, particularly on the part of bilateral and multilateral donors. A broad framework has been developed to guide research during the second phase to ensure that robust and consistent conclusions are drawn and useful practical lessons are learned from widely divergent contexts.

The second phase, whose implementation began in January 2003, includes commissioning four background papers and three comparative studies of policymaking organizations (ministries), research institutes, and intermediary institutions; an open competition of proposals for country studies, cross-country studies, sector studies, good practice studies, episode studies, and action research; and a call for additional summary case studies in underrepresented research areas. Reflecting the broad appeal of the *Bridging Research and Policy* project to development researchers, GDN's June 2003 call for proposals resulted in 367 applications. Consistent with the network's multidisciplinary agenda, this project involves scholars from all the disciplines of social science. The review of applications resulted in the selection of 12 multidisciplinary teams as winners. Among the remaining 13 teams that also received grants, only eight consisted primarily of economists. The funded research focuses on various areas and sectors—agriculture, health, public finance, law and justice, energy, and forestry—in order to analyze the linkage between research and policy in more than 30 developing and transition economies.

The promotion of multidisciplinary research is closely interconnected with the promotion of policy-relevant research, because policy does not know disciplinary boundaries. As an extension of the *Bridging Research and Policy* project, the GDN Secretariat, in cooperation with EERC, developed a proposal on Multidisciplinary and Intermediation Research (MIR), which is being funded by the World Bank and is expected to begin in 2004. MIR seeks to further multidisciplinary approaches to complex development policy issues by supporting regional projects focused on policy puzzles. It plans to engage two of the RNPs that have sufficient analytical capabilities in economics—EERC and SANEI—in order to adapt these capabilities to the demands of addressing policy issues from multidisciplinary social science perspectives. It envisions the submission of Action Plans by EERC and SANEI, issuing calls for

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[27]*Donor Support for Policy Research in Developing Countries*, 7.

proposals of multidisciplinary institutional projects, and the funding of two or three institutional projects conducted by multidisciplinary research teams in each of the regions.

GDN has also made strides toward involving policymakers in its activities. Special policymakers' roundtables have become the highlight of GDN's annual conferences. For example, the Cairo conference policymakers' panel included such prominent leaders as Benjamin Mkapa, President of Tanzania; Ernesto Zedillo, former President of Mexico; Gamal Mubarak, Head of the Policy Secretariat of the National Democratic Party of Egypt; and Rima Khalaf Hunaidi, Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations. A policymakers' roundtable at the Delhi conference featured Grzegorz W. Kolodko, former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance of Poland; Tamar Beruchashvili, Deputy State Minister of Georgia; Juan Antonio Morales, President of the Central Bank of Bolivia; and Edgardo Angara, Senator of the Republic of the Philippines. GDN's conferences are also well attended by government officials and other policymakers, particularly from the country hosting the conference. The RNPs (particularly AERC, LACEA, and EERC) have gained much experience in holding policy forums, and the research of some finalists of the Global Development Awards Competition has achieved exposure thanks to its broad media coverage.

The application of research to policy is not easy due to the following reasons:

- It is difficult with any degree of certainty to demonstrate the impact of a particular research project on policy choices, because policymakers use a wide range of information and analytical documents to arrive at their decisions.
- While the duration of GDN-funded projects is limited in time, their path from research to policy can stretch over several decades, and the long-term character of the research application strategy further complicates pinpointing particular policy impact.
- Finally, considering that GDN's major audience consists of researchers who follow the norms of the academic community, it is difficult to change the convention of giving precedence to academic excellence over policy relevance.

To overcome these difficulties and constraints, GDN intends to rely on the *Bridging Research and Policy* project and its extension, MIR, to advance the measurement of the policy impact of research, learn from the experiences of researchers and policymakers in interacting with each other, and ultimately improve linkages between research and policy through training and applying practical tools and recommendations. Largely driven by the goal of capacity building, GDN-funded research is expected to better translate into policies in the long run—as research skills progress.

While an assessment of the ultimate policy outcome of research is hardly feasible, an evaluation of the process of and progress in bridging research and policy is within the realm of possibility. The number of produced papers and policy briefs, the number of and attendance at policy forums and roundtables of researchers and policymakers, the frequency and impact of media coverage of GDN-funded projects are useful for demonstrating the policy relevance of research. However, a qualitative assessment of the chain of events leading to potential influence on policy is even more enlightening. Such an assessment should consider the links of GDN grantees with the academic community, government, think tanks, and business; review how GDN members build bridges between research

and policy; and explore whether and why their established networks become either influential or irrelevant for policymaking. In the absence of "hard" facts, it is acceptable to learn from anecdotal evidence and then assess its accuracy. The *Bridging Research and Policy* project will provide concrete examples of how best to conduct such evaluations.

VI.   LESSONS FROM THE PAST, PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Although only four years have passed since GDN's establishment, this report has demonstrated the appeal of the network's mission and activities and the significance of its achievements. Three clear lessons emerge from GDN's performance to date:

- The five core activities—the RRCs, Global Development Awards and Medals Competitions, the GRPs, Annual Global Development Conferences, and GDNet— address the self-reported needs of the research community in developing and transition economies. This is not surprising because GDN based its initial selection of activities on an extensive survey of the intended beneficiaries.[28] Strong involvement by researchers from the developing and transition worlds in the design and implementation of GDN's activities through the RNPs and other vehicles helps ensure their continued relevance. It is most encouraging that recent surveys of the GDN community, especially the survey undertaken at the Cairo conference, have revealed broad endorsement of the initial set of activities. The surveys have been also helpful because the respondents' support was accompanied by their suggestions for improvement.

- The five core activities are effective in meeting the needs of the GDN community, especially with respect to building capacity and sharing knowledge. Independent evaluations of GDN's two most prominent activities—the RRCs and the GRPs—have revealed that competition, cross-fertilization, and monitoring by internationally recognized experts are instrumental for building capacity and developing research communities. Even though promotion of research in all social sciences was included in the GDN agenda only in 2001, there is evident progress in terms of multidisciplinary research. Efforts to incorporate researchers from all social sciences have been particularly successful with GDNet, which is rapidly emerging as the primary depository of information on socioeconomic research produced in the developing world.

- The five core activities have also achieved broad, truly global, geographical scope. More than 100 countries participate every year in GDN's activities. Applicants to the annual Global Development Awards Competitions represent approximately 80 countries. With the inauguration of the Oceania Development Network, GDN's eleventh regional network partner, the organization has established its presence in all parts of the world.

The next phase of GDN's development should see further refinement and enrichment of GDN's activities to increase their impact. Based on the lessons drawn from this report, the remainder of this concluding section addresses three questions: What improvements can be made in the five activities? Are there opportunities for cutting unit costs? How should additional resources be

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[28] *Researching the Researchers: Establishing Priorities.*

allocated to ensure greatest cost-benefit effect? The answers to these questions will determine GDN's plans for the future.

Building capacity

The RRCs are now well established, have benefited from the recommendations of external evaluators, and have been further strengthened through the exchange of information on best practices among the RNPs. They are an effective means of developing expertise and knowledge within the developing world. They provide incentives for professional growth and compensation for good work. They identify new and rising stars among researchers and help them rise further by investing in human capital. The current RRC grants, however, represent a small fraction of the funds needed to implement the many high-quality proposals by the RRC applicants. Based on the assessment of demand for and supply of home-grown research, as well as interviews with grantees, an additional $1 million of funding could be easily and effectively absorbed by these competitions.

As noted above, applicants as well as winners and finalists in the Global Development Awards and Medals Competition represent a variety of disciplines and regions. Nevertheless, because GDN operates exclusively in English to contain costs, language remains a key factor limiting submissions to this competition. To broaden the existing opportunities, GDN will consider establishing a special Research Medals Competition for researchers whose primary languages are French or Spanish. Winning papers would be translated into English and would thereby reach GDN's large English-speaking community. With GDN's next annual conference scheduled for Dakar, Senegal, it would be particularly appropriate to launch a Prize for Research in French. A modest amount—$60,000—would be sufficient to offer the prize and cover the cost of the review and the participation of the finalists in the annual conference.

The GRPs have enjoyed considerable success in promoting the views of researchers from developing countries on key development issues. And they have contributed to capacity building through cross-fertilization of research and contact with internationally recognized experts. Discussions that began at GDN's conference in Cairo in January 2003 and continued in Delhi in January 2004 allowed an exchange of views on two prospective GRPs tentatively titled *Moving Out of Poverty: Growth and Freedom from the Bottom Up* and *The Impact of Rich Countries' Policies on Poor Countries' Development*. The Govering Body considers both topics to be of great interest and will make a decision on the revised proposals at its next meeting, scheduled for May 2004. These proposals will require funding in the range of $3 million per project over two years.

In the future GDN plans to select topics for the GRPs through an open competition. Specifically, an announcement posted on GDN's website in February 2004 invited researchers from around the world to submit proposals for future GRPs. Since designing and initiating a GRP require much effort, GDN is offering modest funds to support the preparation of submissions. GDN will also encourage successful applicants to organize workshops at GDN's next annual conference, again with modest financial support from GDN.

Sharing knowledge

The Annual Global Development Conference was rated as the most attractive activity by the respondents in the 1999 survey of research institutes[29] and remains a very popular event, judging by more recent surveys. Despite the fact that the conference represents a high-cost activity (for example, GDN expenses in the Delhi conference were $2,700 per participant, while GDN's annual cost of preparing and circulating a free-of-charge monthly newsletter is only $1.50 per subscriber), a mix of activities is both necessary and desirable. Indeed, results of the 1999 survey suggested that GDN should focus on the widespread provision of low-cost online services and on the limited, well-designed provision of high-demand, high-cost activities, such as the Annual Global Development Conference.[30] That said, ways to reduce the costs of the annual conferences are being actively explored. Costs per participant have already declined from almost $3,500 in Cairo to $2,700 in Delhi, thanks to economies on airfare and conference facilities. In preparing future conferences, the GDN Secretariat will consider greater use of low-cost public facilities and government discounts for hotel accommodations and heavy reliance on local business in terms of funding dinners/receptions.

GDN is attributing an increasing importance to GDNet as the network's electronic voice and a channel of disseminating research generated in developing countries. Furthermore, as costs of electronic exchanges decline and access to the Internet increases, the reliance on GDNet will rise further. While expanding the Knowledge Base remains high on GDNet's agenda, future plans are focused on establishing a new office in Cairo's Smart Village (expected in mid-2004) and the migration of the GDNet portable-systems platform from England, where it is currently hosted, to Cairo (scheduled for the end of 2005). The immediate need therefore is to support both of these changes. Establishing the new GDNet office will require $50,000, while another $400,000 will be needed to transfer the portable systems.

Informing policy

Given the difficulty of translating research into policy and GDN's moderate progress in this area, GDN's future plans call for a major effort to inform policy. The groundwork for this effort has already been laid. In strengthening its outreach to policymakers GDN will rely heavily on its GRP, *Bridging Research and Policy*. Coordinated by EERC (Moscow) and the Overseas Development Institute (London), this project will generate guidelines for researchers on how to make policymakers more aware of their research and how to increase its impact on policy. The project is expected to yield results by January 2005. The program of disseminating results and training researchers on how to make policymakers more aware of their research will commence in 2005. While it is too early to specify the details of this program, it is expected that it will significantly strengthen the link between research and policy, which is a major concern of the donor community. At the appropriate time GDN will call for substantial support, $2–3 million, to translate the research findings and acquired skills into practice.

Two additional points are worthy of note. First, this training program will of course be made available to all interested parties—researchers and policymakers—and not just to researchers

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[29] *Researching the Researchers: Establishing Priorities.*
[30] *Researching the Researchers: Establishing Priorities.*

involved in GDN's activities, thus tremendously increasing the program's potential. And second, since GDN is neither an advocacy group nor is it positioned to endorse any particular policy, its efforts will be directed to strengthening linkages between researchers and policymakers at the local level.

In the meantime, GDN will pursue several other routes to increase the policy impact of GDN-supported and related research. Emulating the best practices of several RNPs that have been successful in organizing policy forums (particularly AERC, LACEA, and EERC), GDN will encourage the better integration of these forums into the RNPs' other activities, including grant competitions. In addition to the requirement of completing a GDN-funded project with a working paper, the RNPs will be encouraged to require their grantees to culminate their research with a one- or two-page policy brief or a presentation at a policy forum. This extended requirement would, in turn, necessitate providing RRC grantees with guidance on how to strengthen the policy relevance of their research and properly package it to reach policymakers.

Furthermore, to advance the policy orientation of GDN-funded research, the composition of the advisory and other boards as well as of the selection committees will be diversified as much as possible to incorporate academics with a policymaking background. Also, researchers known for the policy orientation of their research will be particularly welcome on these boards. Changes in the board and committee composition should enrich GDN's perspectives and raise the profile of GDN and the RNPs, which in turn should facilitate outreach to policymakers.

Multidisciplinary research

Multidisciplinary research warrants special attention since it permeates all of GDN's activities and is an area where more progress is required. As indicated above, the goal of broadening GDN's disciplinary scope is interlinked with advancing the policy relevance of GDN-funded research. Reflecting this association, the Multidisciplinary and Intermediate Research (MIR) initiative is aimed at promoting both multidisciplinary research and research-policy intermediation. During the 30-month pilot launched in 2004, two of the RNPs (in the CIS and South Asia) will engage local research organizations with strong analytical capabilities in economics to address policy issues from a multidisciplinary perspective. Region-specific Calls for Proposals—to be administered by EERC and SANEI—will invite projects that develop and expand sustainable research partnerships among institutions and individuals working on similar policy issues in different disciplines, promote diverse methods of scientific inquiry, and facilitate research-policy intermediation in specific policy areas. Building on the existing capacities of the participating RNPs, the MIR-related activities will be integrated with the regionally managed RRCs. A maximum of six projects will be funded through an open competition during the pilot phase of MIR.

More generally, GDN will improve the monitoring of its progress toward multidisciplinarity by building on the standardized reporting system established between GDN and the RNPs. The universal *GDN reporting workbook* now includes summary statistics on grant applications and project funding as well as participants in the regional meetings across various countries and disciplines of social science. As another measure of improving the monitoring of diversification of the GDN community, participants in the Delhi conference were required to indicate their

discipline, position, organization type (research, government, business, etc.), and geographic region. Moreover, to enforce the further broadening of the themes of GDN's competitions, projects, and conferences, the composition of the reviewers' panels, advisory and other boards as well as selection committees will be diversified to fairly balance social-science disciplines.

Conclusion

This report has highlighted GDN's progress in improving the quality and expanding the quantity of multidisciplinary, policy-relevant research in developing and transition countries. More importantly, GDN has implemented a set of core activities that address the needs of the research community in the developing world, are effective in achieving their goals, and have a broad scope in terms of involved countries and disciplines. To continue successful implementation of these activities and further build on their strengths—especially in building capacity and networking but also increasingly in informing policy—additional donor support is indispensable.