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INSTITUTE FOR POVERTY, LAND AND AGRARIAN STUDIES (PLAAS)

Report on an  
International  
Symposium

# The politics of poverty research and pro-poor policy making

Learning from the practice of policy dialogue

19-20 November 2012

## Hosted by:

The Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) at the University of the Western Cape, the Programme to Support Pro-Poor Policy Development (PSPPD) and the European Union (EU), the Southern Africa Trust (SAT), Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and the Economic Development Department (EDD)



**economic  
development**  
Economic Development Department  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

A place of quality,  
a place to grow, from hope  
to action through knowledge

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## Report on an International Symposium: The politics of poverty research and pro-poor policy making: Learning from the practice of policy dialogue

The symposium was conceptualised and organised by Obiozo Ukpabi, Rebecca Pointer and Andries du Toit (all at PLAAS), with seed funding from The Atlantic Philanthropies

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*“I came to this symposium to untangle the ‘mess’ around policy making and see what the barriers are.”*

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*“When we talk about influencing policy makers, who are we talking about? Parliamentarians are often ignored ... If you want to influence policy makers, how do you do it? There is need to build coalitions, political movements.”*

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*“The role of research-evidence is only one of many variables influencing formulation of public policies – including values, political affiliation, experience, expertise, personal judgement, pressure from different stakeholders etc.”*

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*“More research-evidence into policy will not automatically translate into more poverty reduction and addressing of inequality... evidence-informed policy making is relevant to poverty reduction only if public policies are aiming at poverty reduction.”*

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
<b>SESSION 1: THE POLITICS OF POVERTY RESEARCH AND PRO-POOR POLICY MAKING .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Making sense of ‘evidence’: Thinking the relationship(s) between research and policymaking.....	2
Changing the landscape for poverty research and pro-poor policy development .....	2
<b>SESSION 2: CASE STUDIES ON THE RESEARCH/POLICY MAKING INTERFACE.....</b>	<b>4</b>
The Programme to Support Pro-Poor Policy Development (PSPPD) Case Study: A technocratic response to a political challenge?.....	4
The Human Sciences Research Council as knowledge broker.....	4
Making evidence relevant to policy making – the INASP (non-linear) approach .....	5
Factors that shape policymakers’ use of knowledge .....	5
South Africa’s ICT-to-the-poor policy: Does it reveal the potential of a developmental state?.....	6
<b>SESSION 3: PARALLEL SESSIONS .....</b>	<b>7</b>
More about think tanks in the African, Asian and Latin American context.....	7
Identifying the problem: Systematic reviews & randomised control trials?.....	7
Discussion.....	8
<b>SESSION 4: USING FRAME ANALYSIS FOR SOUTH AFRICAN POLICY DEBATES – A PRACTICAL INTRODUCTION 9</b>	<b>9</b>
Food security/sustainable food systems.....	9
Youth wage subsidy.....	9
Welfare state.....	9
Why fund research?.....	9
<b>SESSION 5: MAKING SENSE OF THE EVIDENCE: EXPLORING NEW MODELS OF KNOWLEDGE INTERACTION .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>PARALLEL 1: RESEARCH COMMUNICATION BEYOND DISSEMINATION .....</b>	<b>10</b>
Research communication.....	10
The visibility of South African research online – Google search on poverty alleviation.....	10
A framework for digital communication .....	10
Introducing DRUSSA.....	11
<b>PARALLEL 2: EXPLORING EVIDENCE-BASED RESEARCH AND FRAMING.....</b>	<b>11</b>
Discussion.....	11

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SESSION 6: KEYNOTE ADDRESS AND CLOSING SESSION .....	12
The politics of poverty research: personal views.....	12
Discussion.....	12
CONCLUSION .....	13
ANNEXURE A: FEEDBACK AND INSIGHTS AFTER THE SYMPOSIUM .....	14
ANNEXURE B: CONFERENCE TWEETS .....	15

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## ABSTRACT

The international symposium looked at the politics of policy-oriented poverty research and pro-poor policymaking. The symposium aimed to explore the research and policymaking nexus by asking: what are the processes by which research agendas are defined, which may shape the interpretation of findings; what are the kinds of poverty research that is being conducted; how is this knowledge used in the development and application of policies addressing poverty? Going beyond simple understandings of evidence-based policymaking, participants were asked to problematise concepts such as research 'uptake' and policy 'impact' and share insights of practice from the 'real world' of policy engagement.

**Keywords:** research to policy, communicating research, framing, poverty alleviation

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## ACRONYMS

CIPPEC	Center for the Implementation of Public Policies Promoting Equity and Growth
DRUSSA	Development Research Uptake in Sub-Saharan Africa
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
INASP	International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications
NIDS	National Income Dynamic Study
PLAAS	Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies
PUCP	Pontifical Catholic University of Peru
SALDRU	Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit
SCA	Scholarly Communication in Africa





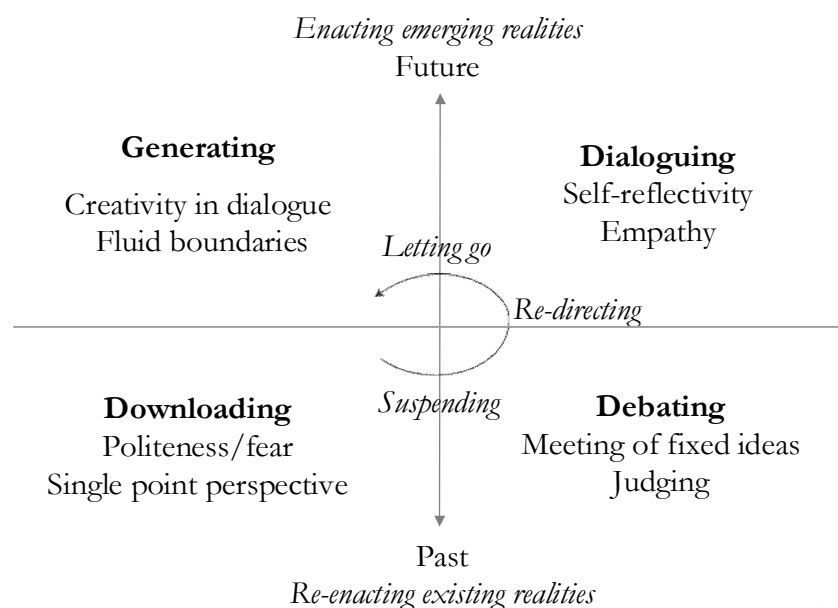
## INTRODUCTION

On 19 and 20 November, researchers and policy makers gathered at the University of the Western Cape for an international symposium entitled *The politics of poverty research and pro-poor policy making: Learning from the practice of policy dialogue*.

The two-day event identified and discussed key conceptual and contextual issues around the politics of poverty research and pro-poor policy making, with particular focus on the role of 'evidence' and the potential for shifting or 'framing' the landscape for poverty research and pro-poor policy making.

The symposium was opened by Obiozo Ukpabi, PLAAS policy dialogue officer, who gave a brief history of PLAAS and outlined its focus on issues of structural poverty and inequality. The event was facilitated by Rebecca Freeth (Reos), who set the tone with a clear outline of various ways of engaging in dialogue:

# Four Ways of Talking and Listening



Source: Kahane after Scharmer



## SESSION 1: THE POLITICS OF POVERTY RESEARCH AND PRO-POOR POLICY MAKING

### Making sense of 'evidence': Thinking the relationship(s) between research and policymaking

presented by Andries du Toit, PLAAS Director

In exploring relationships, connections and interactions between the worlds of research and policy making, we need to consider the 'how to' of policy engagement and research dissemination, **and** interrogate underlying assumptions that guide how we think and act. The presenter sketched the roots of 'evidence based policymaking' (EBP), currently the default frame guiding the way most Anglophone social sciences and policy makers think about policy and research. The presenter argued that EBP is an attempt to develop a *technocratic* response to what is essentially a *political* problem. Critical questions were raised about policy processes, the use and interpretation of 'evidence' and agency. Concerns were raised about the appropriateness of a narrow focus on, clearly defined outcomes and clear causal attribution in the context of dynamic, fluid, complex open systems.

It is not merely evidence that matters, but also the sense-making traditions, ideological frameworks and policy narratives that shape how people make policy sense out of complex evidence. These powerful policy narratives are concerned not only with 'social reality' but also with resources, connection with broader programmes and goals, and alignment with hegemonic discourses/ideologies. The presenter outlined the shift from GEAR as a policy narrative to a new narrative of 'two economies', focusing on the segmented nature of the South African core economy, which allowed for a re-evaluation of evidence and redefinition of the boundaries of 'legitimate' policy.

The presentation concluded with a call to researchers to critically interrogate EBP, broaden the research debate to include means and ends, and look beyond 'good *evidence*' to focus on good *analysis*. In conclusion, Professor du Toit emphasised that researchers need to be self-reflective about the role of values, politics and ideology, and make politics in policy an explicit focus of research.

In the discussion that followed, participants were encouraged to reflect on and share their reasons for attending the symposium in small groups, and to highlight any points raised during the presentation that resonated with their experience.

### Changing the landscape for poverty research and pro-poor policy development

presented by Margy Waller, Topos Partnership

The presenter gave a dynamic and entertaining presentation on the effective use of 'framing' to shift pro-poor policy making under the Clinton administration in the United States. After working as a legal aid lawyer, Margy Waller moved into policy work, and worked with the Clinton administration for some years. She works at the Topos Foundation, an institute engaged in culture change – creating an environment in which policy based on research and data seem like simple common-sense solutions.

Her presentation illustrated graphically the power of 'framing' through the example of pro-poor policy making in the United States. Framing is way more than merely a communication tool. Margy demonstrated how information overload and cultural beliefs affect what we 'hear' – and 'frame' conversations. Framing science analysis enables us to learn how people think, not just what they know. Framing provides a new conceptual understanding that allows us to lead rather than merely follow, by examining the lens through which the public views an issue. Framing research identifies dominant 'frames' and informs the selection of a single frame that can reach across groups or populations on an issue.

Margy outlined the basic methodology and tools used in framing research, including extensive interviews, focus groups, media analysis and surveys. Using the example of the US and public opinion on poverty and welfare, she illustrated how the underlying dominant frames were identified, and the reframing process. Framing influences choices about what is researched and how research is presented publicly. Effective framing defines the issue, who is responsible and who is the change maker.

In the discussion that followed, questions were raised about whether framing was applicable universally, what role the media has in framing issues, and the relevance of framing in shifting policy narratives or contesting policy terrain. These key themes continued to unfold during the symposium.

## SESSION 2: CASE STUDIES ON THE RESEARCH/POLICY MAKING INTERFACE

In this session, national and international case studies were presented and discussed, focusing on various aspects of the research / policy making interface. Brief summaries of the presentations are provided below.

### The Programme to Support Pro-Poor Policy Development (PSPPD) Case Study: A technocratic response to a political challenge?

presented by Mastoera Sadan, PSPPD

Mastoera Sadan sketched the background to the Programme to Support Pro-poor Policy Development (PSPPD), a partnership between the Presidency, the National Planning Commission (NPC) and the European Union (EU). The overall objective was to improve public policy interventions and develop a cadre of researchers and policy makers with a deeper understanding of changing socio-economic dynamics. Mastoera gave an overview of Vision 2014 that aimed to halve poverty and unemployment and described the key pillars of the programme – research, linkage building and capacity development. In addition to grantmaking for specific research, the PSPPD has played a key role providing platforms and encouraging engagement between researchers and policy makers.



Mastoera stressed the importance of evidence-based policy making (EBPM) in improving decisions and outcomes, despite its limitations. EBPM improves the nature of policy making by encouraging a more systematic approach to developing policy, introducing rationality into political process about choices and opening up policy space. Using the example of early childhood development (ECD), she described the current political and policy ‘window’ or opportunity for intervention in this critical area, drawing on solid research conducted.

### The Human Sciences Research Council as knowledge broker

presented by Alison Bullen, HSRC

Alison Bullen described the role of the HSRC, and raised some of the challenges in the research/policy nexus and how the HSRC attempts to address these. The HSRC serves as a knowledge hub to bridge the gap between research, policy and action, and increase the impact and uptake of research. This is achieved through collaboration with key constituencies, including government, other research organisations, multinational agencies, universities, non-government organisations, and donor and development organisations. There has been some success with creating safe space for engagement between policy makers and researchers.

The presentation outlined the role of the Research Use and Impact Assessment (RIA) unit, which consolidates the HSRC's dissemination and knowledge management activities and supports research programmes to maximise impact and uptake of research. There is clear need for platforms through which policy makers can engage with the research agenda. The Policy Action Network (PAN), established with funding from the Department of Science and Technology and support from the PSPPD, aims to build an independent community of practice for researchers, policy makers and civil society groups through a website, newsletters and case studies. PAN: Children was established with UNICEF to establish a community of practice for researchers, practitioners and policy makers involved in the area of child rights.

## Making evidence relevant to policy making - the INASP (non-linear) approach

presented by Antonio Capillo, INASP

The presentation outlined the basis for INASP's multi-dimensional approach – shifting from evidence-based policy making (EBPM) to evidence-informed policy making (EIPM). The EIPM Programme at INASP aims to bridge the gap between the production of research-evidence (supply) and its reception and implementation by policy makers (demand). While much (useful) emphasis is placed on how evidence is produced and communicated externally and how it can influence public policies, less effort is put into working directly with policy makers to build their capacity/skills/knowledge to find, assess, interpret and use research-evidence into policy making. The presentation traced the differences between EBPM and EIPM, and how to reach policy influencers, not only policy makers. INASP provides policy influencers with tools to increase their impact on policy makers.

Research-evidence is only one among many variables influencing the formulation of public policies, including values, political affiliation, experience, expertise, personal judgement, pressure from different stakeholders, and so on. It is crucial to investigate the interaction between these different variables in informing and motivating public policies, and to explore how research-evidence can help interpretation of these interactions. In closing, the presentation emphasised that more research-evidence will not automatically translate into increased reduction of poverty and inequality; evidence-informed policy making is relevant to poverty reduction **only** if public policies are **aimed** at poverty reduction.

## Factors that shape policymakers' use of knowledge

presented by Vita Febriany, SMERU, Indonesia

Vita Febriany outlined some of the key factors influencing the use of knowledge (or evidence) by policy makers in Indonesia, and illustrated the politics underlying the commissioning and uptake of research in policy making. Research has often been used to bolster or defend policy positions and approaches to addressing problems that have already been adopted (although such positions could also support particular elements of the bureaucracy in intra-governmental competition for resources). Quantitative impact evaluations were particularly useful in helping government to defend programmes in the Parliament, and at times to justify continued government funding. The presentation concluded with identifying factors that may discourage policy makers from using evidence, including resource limits, resistance from bureaucrats and corporate interests, short time frames and limited research capacity, along with inadequate capacity for analysis by policy makers.

## South Africa's ICT-to-the-poor policy: Does it reveal the potential of a developmental state?

presented by Einar Braathen, Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research, Norway

The presentation began with a brief sketch of the concept of the developmental state in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Development states in Africa need to place equal emphasis on *economic* policy and *social* policy to enhance socially inclusive development (human centered development) (T. Mkandawire et al, 2010). Within this framework, the presentation explored progress in relation to implementation of ICT-to-the-poor policy in South Africa. It outlined the findings of a micro CLIQ project (Community-based, Learning, ICTs and Quality of Life) conducted as part of a three-year South Africa-Norway Research Co-operation Programme by Professor Julian May (then of University of KwaZulu-Natal) and Professor Einar Braathen of the Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research. The study used participatory action research to investigate whether needs-based computer training and use was improving the quality of life for poor people in four KwaZulu Natal communities. The presentation outlined the many challenges faced and raised critical questions about the capacity (and motivation) of policy makers and the reasons for lack of implementation and policy failure.



## SESSION 3: PARALLEL SESSIONS

### More about think tanks in the African, Asian and Latin American context

presented by Leandro Echt (CIPPEC) & Andrea Ordonez (Grupo Faro)

This session began with presentations by Leandro Echt (CIPPEC) and Andrea Ordonez (Grupo Faro) on policy influencing and the role of think tanks in different regional contexts. Key points raised included the need to understand policy narratives and sense-making traditions, to critically examine 'neutrality' and the political role of think tanks, and to build an organisational culture. There is potential for think tanks to leverage space and opportunities for engagement and change, not only with government but also with the private sector.

The presentations sparked a lively discussion on the politics of research and raised questions around the role of think tanks in terms of funding, political party affiliation/leaning, and 'neutrality'. Participants discussed regional similarities and differences between think tanks in terms of communication strategies, research tools and how they navigate politics. Other issues discussed included how to separate influence from research and the pros and cons of centralising communication. While centralisation assists in providing internal and external coherence, by default you end up with specialists as people move to their favourite areas. The need for a clear vision and communication plan was emphasised, as well as the importance of outlining the different roles and expertise required for communications and research. Another key topic of discussion (and debate) related to whether think tanks should adopt a political 'position' on key issues, and the difference between presenting research, influencing policy, shaping ideas and lobbying.

### Identifying the problem: Systematic reviews & randomised control trials?

presented by Sean Muller (SALDRU, UCT) and Jeff Knezovich (IDS)

This session saw two presentations on the growing trend towards the use and application of methodologies developed in 'hard' sciences – randomised control trials and systematic reviews – in social science research.

In the first presentation Sean Muller sketched a brief history of the use of randomised control trials (RCTs) in 'hard' science. A critical view was offered of the growing trend to use RCTs in social science research, and its increasing dominance as a narrative within economics, with a big impact on other social sciences. RCTs are considered the 'gold standard' within a concept of an evidence hierarchy, with the assumption that findings can be translated directly into a clear-cut policy answer. RCTs are not necessarily an appropriate tool to explore mechanisms for social change. Questions were raised about the applicability of this method and the need to interrogate its underlying assumptions. There are links between a methodology adopted and the results obtained – and this needs to be made explicit.

In the second presentation Jeff Knezovich explored the question of whether we have the right methods for knowledge synthesis for policy engagement, with particular reference to the use (and costs) of systematic reviews. After sharing his 'lens' – strengthening health systems – he presented a powerful critique of the use of systematic reviews in policy research. In his view, complex dynamic systems require trans-disciplinary approaches.

## Discussion

The session concluded with lively discussion on research methods, the nature of 'evidence', and the role of research in a dynamic, changing world. In the words of one participant: "We can't look to research to provide answers to questions that research can't answer! How much evidence is enough? After years of climate change research, we still do not have the answers. These are political problems that need to be engaged with."





## SESSION 4: USING FRAME ANALYSIS FOR SOUTH AFRICAN POLICY DEBATES - A PRACTICAL INTRODUCTION

On Day 2, the focus of the workshop shifted towards practical application of framing analysis in a South African context. Margy Waller kicked off with a brief presentation of an effective campaign to shift public opinion and increase support for public funding of the arts in Cincinnati. Andries du Toit invited participants to discuss their theory of change in their field.

This was followed by breakaway discussion groups on 'framing' in key policy areas suggested by participants: food security/sustainable food systems; youth wage subsidy; welfare state; and why fund research? Participants were asked to identify the dominant frames, to discuss the consequences and to suggest alternative frames in each policy area. Key points from the exercise are summarised below.

### Food security/sustainable food systems

Dominant frames were identified as "Food must be cheap so that people can buy it", "cheap food is found in supermarkets", "the larger the scale, the cheaper the food" and "healthy food costs more". The consequences of these dominant frames are: concentration, environmental degradation, vulnerable open food systems, quantity over quality, resource intensive. An alternative frame would be: "healthy food = healthy people = healthy South Africa = greater productivity and stability for all".

### Youth wage subsidy

The dominant frame on this issue is "We need the youth wage subsidy to reduce youth unemployment". The evidence for this is ambiguous (RCT & simulation study). An opposing dominant frame is: "Subsidy will substitute young workers for older (higher paid) and will subsidise business" (view held by trade unions).

An alternative frame would involve changing the name and possibly also introducing alternative policies that target youth unemployment and bringing all social partners together to debate this 'package'.

### Welfare state

Dominant frames are that welfare pays poor people to do nothing and is a Utopian concept. Welfare is a handout and robs people of their dignity. These perceptions are presented by the media, politicians, World Bank and in communities. Other frames put forward were: "the rainbow nation has failed", "consumerism and individualism", "pull yourself up by your bootstraps". Is there any possibility in reclaiming a word - 'welfare'?

### Why fund research?

The dominant frame was identified as "Research drives development and innovation". Dominant dialogues frame the agenda - publishing journals are academic. How does research benefit society? Does the public understand the role of science? There are policy choices to be made about public funding for research - should these be 'big' science (SKA) or relevant science (food security?). We need to train researchers to ensure local research as this is a matter of national self-sustainability and intellectual independence. But how does the public perceive research as affecting their lives? For public, key issues are education and mobility. So reframe the 'knowledge economy' - use research that has public impact to increase public support for research funding.

## SESSION 5: MAKING SENSE OF THE EVIDENCE: EXPLORING NEW MODELS OF KNOWLEDGE INTERACTION

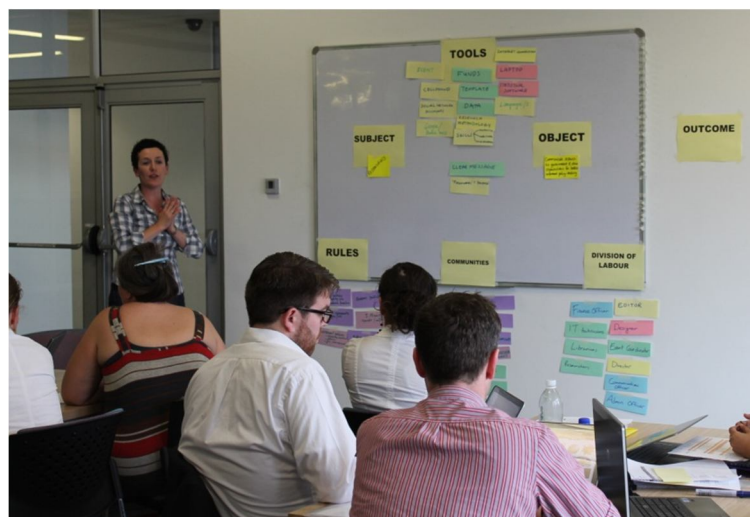
### PARALLEL 1: RESEARCH COMMUNICATION BEYOND DISSEMINATION

convened by Rebecca Pointer (PLAAS), Michelle Willmers (SCA/UCT), Laura Czerniewicz (OpenUCT) & Linda Cilliers (DRUSSA)

#### Research communication

presented by Michelle Willmers  
(SCAP/UCT)

The presenter presented a framework for viewing communication as occurring in an ecosystem of four factors – communities, tools, rules, and division of labour. Participants identified and listed the actors they believed were in their communities, the tools at their disposal, the rules and restrictions which regulated their communications and lastly, the supporters they have in the division of labour. The presenter drew on this input to discuss stages in the communication process, emphasising the importance of curation for the storage of all research in this process.



#### The visibility of South African research online - Google search on poverty alleviation

presented by Laura Czerniewicz (Open UCT)

Laura introduced a research project conducted on the visibility of South African research online. The presentation began by acknowledging that much academic research has been undertaken on poverty and inequality in South Africa, and that the outputs of this work are important to government, academia and civil society. The research project explored Google search results for the terms “poverty” and “poverty alleviation”, with 20 participants located around the world. Only one participant found a South African publication, stored in the Rhodes University Repository. Laura echoed the call made by Michelle in the previous input for the curation of research to increase its visibility and accessibility online. She stressed the importance of this in the light of the movement towards open access in the North, which could overshadow research from the South even more.

#### A framework for digital communication

presented by Nick Scott (ODI)

In this dynamic presentation, Nick offered key ideas for effective digital research communication. He outlined some of the forces that are changing communication, including the rise of social media and newer forms of content. Identifying key digital challenges and opportunities for researchers, Nick stressed the importance of keeping research online on the platform most relevant to your target audience. He outlined various stages of the online communication process and creative ways to implement these: creating demand, empowering researchers and communicating on a tight budget, including the use of digital information and Creative Commons. Nick urged researchers to stop 'looking down' on Wikipedia, and to strongly consider adding their work.

## Introducing DRUSSA

presented by Diana Coates (DRUSSA)

Diana Coates sketched the background to the establishment of DRUSSA (Development Research Uptake in Southern Africa), a DIFD-sponsored programme working in 24 Sub-Saharan African universities to improve their capacity to manage the uptake of research by their key stakeholders. The model seeks to strengthen capacity and participation. Given the geographical locations of these institutions, the DRUSSA website is a key tool in building links and improved communication between institutions.

## PARALLEL 2: EXPLORING EVIDENCE-BASED RESEARCH AND FRAMING

co-convended by Sean Muller (SALDRU, UCT) & Reza Daniels (NIDS, UCT)

This parallel session saw intense discussion from an earlier session continue in a small group around the role of research, the nature of 'evidence', the merits of evidence-based versus evidence-influenced policy making, the use of varying research methods and tools, and the use and applicability of framing in research. Evidence does not solve the problem, and EBP was proposed initially as a way to move beyond ideology or guesswork. EBP works well as a framework when there is a clear problem and one solution is required. The issue of who 'frames' research is critical in the politics of policy making – as is the question of 'who' is involved in dialogue around policy. Beyond evidence is the question of analysis – making sense of, interpreting and 'framing' of evidence, and contesting analyses. One participant pointed out, "Just because it's evidence doesn't mean it's true!", while another responded: "Just because evidence is rejected doesn't mean it wasn't true!" Researchers produce data, which can become a body of evidence, but we should move away from the idea that this is producing **facts**. Even in choosing questions in research, we are framing, although slightly differently perhaps from how politicians frame. Policy is not the only goal of research. The role of researchers is changing.

## Discussion

In a plenary session after the parallel sessions, several key issues were raised for discussion. Contrasting views were expressed on whether framing is a communication tool or a research method, and whether it is universally applicable. Another suggestion made was that it is useful to rather think of framing and research as two dimensions. The issue of agency and the need to identify and target different actors in the policy-making process was highlighted. With regard to research communication, the inaccessibility of South African research materials online was highlighted, and researchers were encouraged to explore and use the wide range of 'free' materials and resources readily accessible online.

## SESSION 6: KEYNOTE ADDRESS AND CLOSING SESSION

### The politics of poverty research: personal views

presented by Neva Makgetla, Deputy Director General: Policy, Economic Development Department

This presentation was scheduled for the opening session, but due to an urgent recall to Pretoria, Neva Makgetla gave the closing address. Her hard-hitting presentation contextualised the politics of poverty research and the relationship with policy making.

In addressing the question of where research fits into the policy process, she outlined each stage and the different kinds of research required – from diagnosis to implementation, monitoring and evaluation. She pointed out the need for government to also consider political ‘costs’ in making policy. She cautioned against throwing out evidence-based policy as, in her view, too much government policy lacks evidence.

Outlining some key differences between academic research and policy research/needs, the presenter emphasised that policy research needed to be based on diagnosis of a problem, come up with specific proposals and propose areas of responsibility, often on tight deadlines. She suggested monitoring and evaluation of policy implementation as a key area for research, as evidenced in some PLAAS work. She pointed out the need to frame research in terms of government priorities if the aim is to influence policy. Early engagement and relationship building would ensure that policy makers are ‘in the room’ when research agendas are set, and help to define research questions and ensure its relevance.

In closing, Neva Makgetla posed some key questions for participants to reflect on: Why are you doing research instead of policy? What is different between communicating an issue and framing it? How do we move from a discourse of power to a discourse of reason? Why don't policy makers listen to researchers? Is this due to class, incompetence or what? Would you skew your findings for a policy debate?

### Discussion

The presentation culminated in a plenary discussion, drawing together key themes that unfolded during the symposium. The question of reaching policy influencers, not merely policy makers, was raised. It was suggested that there is a continuum of research – not merely the twin pillars of academic or policy research – which includes, or should include, a ‘breathing’ space to hold a conversation about broader issues. Other issues raised included the impact of funding on research agendas and findings, the link between activism and social change and the role of researchers, political considerations in raising policy critiques, the need for space to frame and reframe issues, the time restraints involved in policy making and concerns with measuring impact.

## CONCLUSION

PLAAS has a strong history of engagement in policy making, and aims consciously to broaden its audiences, encourage self-reflection and promote dialogue on issues of poverty and inequality. This symposium aimed to stimulate conversation between researchers, communicators and policy makers. The two-day event saw lively discussion on the nature and role of 'evidence', dominant methodologies in social science research, and ways to make 'sense' and meaning of data.

The final session saw animated discussion on how to take forward the following issues:

- ❖ Appropriate methodologies in social science research;
- ❖ The use of 'framing' to shift dominant policy narratives and popular discourses around poverty;
- ❖ How to deepen understanding of the context and politics around the process of policy making;
- ❖ Political 'neutrality' or political 'position' of think tanks/research institutes;
- ❖ Ongoing engagement with policy makers to identify and establish relevant research agendas;
- ❖ Self-reflection on the role of researchers; and
- ❖ Exploring new methods to improve communication and knowledge interaction.

The event was a great success – with vibrant discussion, new ways of looking at challenges of both powerful communication and interaction on the connected and contested terrains of poverty research and pro-poor policy making in South Africa, and beyond.

Through the exchanges of experience and research some fresh, innovative frameworks were brought forward which enable a more critical, realistic approach to the policymaking nexus, with a specific focus on the politics of poverty research and pro-poor policy development. As some of these frameworks, and continued networking and sharing ideas around these issues find traction in our practice, it is hoped the outcomes from the symposium may contribute to an improved understanding of the interests, values, ideologies, and other dimensions of stakeholder interests that inform the interactions on this terrain. Participants are encouraged to keep in touch, and to link back and circulate any social media coverage.

Our thanks go to the partners and funders who made the event possible – PSPPD and the European Union, the Southern Africa Trust, Economic Development Department, and the Human Sciences Research Council. Thanks also go to Enrique Mendizabal, Pierrinne Leukes for conference tweeting (hash tag #povertypolitics,) Rebecca Freeth for excellent facilitation, Vaun Cornell for acting as rapporteur, and last, but not least, all participants for their engaging contributions.

## ANNEXURE A: FEEDBACK AND INSIGHTS AFTER THE SYMPOSIUM

*“We need to critically examine our ‘unexamined’ frame”.*

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*“When we talk about influencing policy makers, who are we talking about? Parliamentarians are often ignored ... If you want to influence policy makers, how do you do so? There is need to build coalitions, political movements.”*

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*“Should think tanks be ‘neutral’ or should they hold / push a position on policy issues?”*

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*“There is an opportunity for communication workers and researchers to hold a similar dialogue, looking at ways to improve communication and dissemination of research.”*

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*“For research to make more of an impact, researchers need to understand the needs of policy makers – engage with them in setting research agendas. Also, ensure that recommendations are more realistic.”*

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*“I found the reflection on the theory of change very useful. Perhaps we need to examine the tendency to treat policy as an end goal.”*

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*“We need to distinguish clearly between policy makers and politicians.”*

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*“We need to engage with policy makers from the outset – in setting research agendas.”*

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## ANNEXURE B: CONFERENCE TWEETS

#PovertyPolitics Digital challenges for researchers: How to help your research stand out? Measure success of research communications?

#PovertyPolitics Digital challenges: How do you get complex messages across when users often only scan research.

#PovertyPolitics Create demand for an idea. "Being there communications" approach: pushing info to the users you want to reach.

#PovertyPolitics Use the media that people use all the time, instead of posting to your own blog.

#PovertyPolitics Research organizations should tap into social media the same way that politicians are using SM to access/engage people

#PovertyPolitics Use whatever your audience uses, not necessarily SM. It's not about doing everything. It's about doing the right thing.

PovertyPolitics "Cradle to grey" research : Use online in every step of your research and beyond.

#PovertyPolitics In the "life" stage : use different mediums to disseminate- infographic, podcast, video, blog post.

#PovertyPolitics The grey: On the Internet, information never dies. Revisit old research. There is always an interest for ideas.

#PovertyPolitics Information added to Wikipedia will be part of the world's collective knowledge in the future.

#PovertyPolitics Communicating on a tight budget. Orgs wrongly think that the Internet is expensive to use.

#PovertyPolitics Take advantage of the wealth of freely available content online.

#PovertyPolitics People are used to thinking academics doing research, but not universities as knowledge hubs

#PovertyPolitics Aging researchers, emigration, moonlight consulting, leaving academia, all reasons for research output decline

#PovertyPolitics Next steps after publication, like informing external stakeholders and the public are now happening due to efforts by DRUSSA

#PovertyPolitics DRUSSA findings show African universities weak at the policy level, but stronger at the practice level

#PovertyPolitics Consultancy is hollowing out the capacity of universities

#PovertyPolitics Universities should put together a model of centralized functional capacity that helps researchers put their work to use

@SCAprogramme is looking at communications activity system whereby all components influence each other #PovertyPolitics

#PovertyPolitics As an organization if you are undertaking a scholarly communication there are certain factors you need, like an Ecosystem.

#PovertyPolitics The factors: tools, rules, communities, division of labour-> outcome.

#PovertyPolitics Think of Communities as the pockets of people you want to infiltrate.

#PovertyPolitics Division of labour as the support services you need to communicate effectively

#PovertyPolitics Communities: Activists, iNGOs, parastatals, students, twitter community, mainstream media, research peers, NGOs+CBOs, funders.

#PovertyPolitics Communities: provincial, national and local departments and govt bureaucrats.

#PovertyPolitics: Tools: cellphones, social network accounts, templates, Internet connection, data, laptop, funds, software, research methodology

#PovertyPolitics Tools: Skills in terms of analysis, writing and presentation, followers and friends.

#PovertyPolitics All the things you think of as tools are things that you can potentially share.

#PovertyPolitics Tools: Language (terminology) and languages, search engines.

#PovertyPolitics Division of labour: Editor, designer, event coordinator, director, communications officer, administrative officer

#PovertyPolitics: Division of labour: finance officer, IT technicians, librarians, researchers.  
#PovertyPolitics Rules: academic freedom, reporting relationships, funder's requirements. Institutional polices (quality control, ethics)  
#PovertyPolitics Rules: academic publishing, confidentiality (funder imposed), Methodology.  
#PovertyPolitics Step one: Framing- Audience/language/Data/angle. Step two: Platform. Step 3: Internal production process. Step 4: Curation  
#PovertyPolitics Curation- to communicate content to an audience we need it well kept and stored.  
#PovertyPolitics Curation: Websites, content management, repositories (meta data) and digital libraries.  
#PovertyPolitics Step 5: Dissemination. Step 6: Evaluation  
#PovertyPolitics You need to think strategically and think about the enterprise in an activity system when planning communication.  
#PovertyPolitics Don't only think of outcome and platform, but think of all the tools, rules, communities and division of labour.

#PovertyPolitics Investigation of Google searches: Poverty Alleviation and Poverty Alleviation on Google and Google scholar.  
#PovertyPolitics Google search results are localized and personalized.  
#PovertyPolitics Where, which, what types, ranking and similarities and differences (of the research results).  
#PovertyPolitics Google: South African participants had no localized SA based results.  
#PovertyPolitics Poverty Alleviation in SA- 1 result on both Google and Google scholar found in the Rhodes University repository.  
#PovertyPolitics Rhodes University has created a repository for curation processes which has increased visibility and searchability  
#PovertyPolitics The global North mandating opening access will lead to increased visibility and availability of northern research  
#PovertyPolitics Increased visibility of northern research is great for our access, but not for our own research visibility.