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Rising Powers in International Development

Rising Powers in International Development: Building an Agenda for Collaboration

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The IDS programme on Strengthening Evidence-based Policy works across seven key themes. Each theme works with partner institutions to co-construct policy-relevant knowledge and engage in policy-influencing processes. This material has been developed under the Rising Powers theme.

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Contents

- 1 Background: Rising Powers in International Development workshop 2**
 - 1.1 The Advisory Council 2
 - 1.2 Composition 2
- 2 The Advisory Council’s inaugural meeting 4**
- 3 Conclusion 7**
- 4 International context and policy agenda overview: Advisory Council meeting with researchers 8**
- Annex 1 Complete participant list and biographies 9**

1 Background: Rising Powers in International Development workshop

The Institute of Development Studies (IDS) launched the *IDS BRICS Initiative* in 2011, which aimed to examine the multi-faceted role of the BRICS countries – Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa – as actors in international development. The Initiative was designed to promote learning from the experiences of the BRICS and other Rising Powers, and to stimulate debate on the implications of these countries' growing importance for international development policy and practice – an arena where the BRICS have to date received limited attention from academia and policymakers.

An initial consultation process carried out amongst IDS' wide network of think tanks, universities and civil society partners in 2011/12 across the BRICS countries showed there was significant interest in engaging in further discussions around this agenda. At the same time, IDS was awarded funding by UKAID, the British Department for International Development (DFID), which meant it was able to increase the scope of the BRICS Initiative and launch a full research programme, titled *Rising Powers in International Development* (RPID).

IDS marked the launch of the programme with a workshop that brought together participants from potential partner institutions in the BRICS countries to discuss an agenda for future collaboration in research, teaching, and policy work, focusing on development theory, development policy, development practice, and development resource flows; through conceptual and methodological framework development and scoping at the country level, in specific sectors, and in 'AidLand' more generally.

The workshop brought together a diverse group of actors, including researchers and practitioners working in international development in the BRICS and beyond; and provided an opportunity to share and gain new perspectives on the state of the debate of development across the BRICS.

1.1 The Advisory Council

The primary function of the Advisory Council (AC) is to provide high-level guidance on key debates in international development policy and on how network member organisations can best influence these debates through their research and other activities. AC members would also be invited to review and comment on specific policy-relevant outputs from the network, and to participate in public events promoted by the network. At the same time, their advice is welcomed on potential new network members, as well as on funding opportunities for additional research and policy work beyond the core programme.

1.2 Composition

The Advisory Council members were invited to join the programme in a personal capacity, on the basis of their experience rather than their institutional affiliation. They are not serving members of any national government, or current employees of any of the member institutions of the proposed Future Development Policy Network. They all have considerable prior development policy experience, with a concentration of members from the Rising Powers and the OECD countries.

The first meeting of the Advisory Council was chaired by the UK member, although there are AC-elected co-chairs, who work on a rotating basis to allow for all members to play this role over the course of time.

- **Richard Manning:** President of the Advisory Council: Former Director-General for DFID; former Chair of the OECD DAC; Chair of the IDS Board of Trustees
- **Gabriele Köhler:** IDS Visiting Fellow; former UN official
- **KY Amoako:** Founder-President of the African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET); former Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA); former member of the World Bank Institute's Advisory Council
- **Li Xiaoyun:** Professor at the China Agricultural University, Director of the China-DAC Study Group
- **Merle Lipton:** Associate Fellow, Chatham House Africa Programme; Visiting Research Fellow, King's College London
- **Nora Lustig:** Professor at Tulane University; Fellow at the Center for Global Development; Co-founder and president of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic Association (LACEA); Member of the IDS Board of Trustees
- **Rajesh Tandon:** Founder-President of the Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA); Member of the IDS Board of Trustees
- **Richard Carey:** Former Director, Development Co-operation Directorate, OECD; and former co-chair China-DAC Study Group; Member of the IDS Board of Trustees
- **Rômulo Paes de Sousa:** IDS Senior International Associate; former Vice-Minister for Social Development, Government of Brazil

KY Amoako joined the meeting via Skype; Nora Lustig was not able to attend.

2 The Advisory Council’s inaugural meeting

The *Rising Powers in International Development* co-convenor, Alex Shankland, joined the meeting in order to present an overview of the programme and its objectives, and outlined the Advisory Council’s (AC) role to:

- Set priorities for policy engagement;
- Engage outwards with the actors in global policy spaces;
- Advise on thematic challenges on policy, advisory, teaching and research;
- Provide the long view;
- Identify strategic issues relevant to the programme.

This introductory meeting served to allow the AC to establish how they could best add value to the RPID programme, as well as establish the Council’s work processes.

The consensus from the AC was that shifting global landscapes in international development make this Initiative a timely one. The strategic role of the RPID programme in informing government policy will be important as it seeks to answer questions on the role of the BRICS and other Rising Powers as actors in development.

The Advisory Council made a number of stimulating suggestions, raising issues that require further study or consideration by researchers and policymakers, whilst advising on the boundaries of the programme. The next step is for the AC to provide guidance on:

- Priorities;
- Sequencing;
- Additional funding;
- Processes;
- Engaging with and influencing policy processes: what are the best entry points in terms of access, impact, and actors/themes chosen?

The most frequent topic proposed by the AC for further study in terms of a policy focus was ‘Learning from the Rising Powers’ across different thematic areas (see detailed list below). A consensus emerged regarding the importance of considering countries beyond the BRICS as part of the ‘Rising Powers’, and to consider different configurations of the BRICS grouping in some fields; for example, the BICS’ action in agriculture was mentioned, leaving Russia out (Li). Other issues of interest for the Advisory Council are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1 Key issues for the Advisory Council

Theme	Question	Comments	Advisory Council member
Africa’s economic development	How do the BRICS contribute to Africa’s economic development, and how do they interact with each other and towards other ‘recipient’ or ‘partner’ countries?	The diversity of the African continent means recognising 54 countries cannot have a homogenous approach to policies and partnerships with the BRICS/Rising Powers	KY Amoako

(Cont’d.)

Table 1 (cont'd.)

Theme	Question	Comments	Advisory Council member
Sovereignty and intervention	Is it necessary/essential/relevant to look at these themes?	The RP are all focused on this and criticise the West for its stance. However, three of the BRICS have a human rights agenda, whereas the other two do not	Merle Lipton
Conflict resolution	Does this also come within RPID purview?	China announced \$8 billion for South Sudan – significant for a country in conflict It is important to understand the impact this will have on conflict	Merle Lipton and Gabriele Koehler
Security	How to engage with the BRICS' security agenda?	See BRICS Summit policy statement on the issue of security – this is considered key	Gabriele Koehler
	Consider the emerging voice of Fragile States with the New Deal at HLF4 Busan		Gabriele Koehler
Agriculture		Agriculture in the BICS is particularly interesting: see figures for agricultural trade: China trades significantly with Brazil, e.g. soy	Li Xiaoyun
Governance		All the BRICS have 'reasonably good' institutions; but local-level democratic accountability is questionable; and basic social protection promises are not kept because of these governance deficits	Rajesh Tandon
Inequality and social protection	Social protection programmes are/should be used by the Rising Powers/BRICS to address this	Rising Powers have all enjoyed 10% annual growth rates while 30–60% of the population live on <\$1 a day	Rajesh Tandon
	Consider the issues of justice and social rights in the debate/work on inequality		Gabriele Koehler
	Understanding the processes leading to change and successful policies	The Brazil approach to social protection works, but it is important to understand process. Examples of policies that have attracted other countries' attention: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brazil's social protection policies • South Africa socioeconomic reforms • China's poverty reduction programme 	Rômulo Paes
	How best to learn from other countries?	China has significant experience in addressing traditional challenges such as overall poverty reduction but also new challenges, i.e. inequality	Li Xiaoyun
		In Brazil the positive trend of decreasing inequality in the face of growth is due to social protection programmes, but this is different in China and India	Rômulo Paes

(Cont'd.)

Table 1 (cont'd.)

Theme	Question	Comments	Advisory Council member
Learning from the BRICS		Chinese knowledge of international and national development is very valuable but many people are not aware of this	Li Xiaoyun
	How to improve inter-country learning exchanges?	Brazil is working on this There is a possibility that contributions to this would help the learning process	Rômulo Paes
		Suggestion of RPID producing an evidence-based policy leaflet for BRICS leaders identifying the added value in this shared role and vision	Rômulo Paes
A BRICS approach to addressing challenges such as inequality	How to find a BRICS principle of combining these new and traditional challenges?	RPID programme could help BRICS countries find common ways of working together, regardless of the fact that the BRICS' heterogeneity is often ignored – as with the OECD – when comparisons are drawn between the countries	Li Xiaoyun
		When trying to produce public knowledge it is standard practice to establish the state of the art; then adapt, change, and use Modern telecommunications allow for rapid change and improvements, and there is significant demand from the BRICS to improve institutional/inter-country learning	
Methodologies /Learning from others	Learning from others	Methodologies are very important – and allow for a better way of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding your partners and knowing what you're looking for • not being paralysed by scale, i.e. number of civil servants or budget needed 	Rômulo Paes
	Developing a methodological framework/methods to talk about these themes is key	This will allow it to speak to some of these different issues, both in terms of thematic and geographic expertise	Rômulo Paes
Engaging with other 'Rising Powers' countries	How should/can the RPID programme engage with/study other Rising Powers?	Note that Saudi Arabia is the largest global donor, and the OIC's 2010 development charter is very progressive Turkey is carrying out significant research in the field of Development Studies and on the international/third sector; all these factors merit further attention Note also some of the BRICS will face pressure from countries in other groupings, e.g. G77	Rajesh Tandon
BRICS' heterogeneity	How to address this?	RPID programme requires a variable geometry approach	Richard Manning

3 Conclusion

This wealth of important suggestions was welcomed, but the need for a streamlined approach to the policy-influencing agenda is key, as well as delineating how to begin addressing these issues. The question of how to best influence government policymakers in the Rising Powers and engage with the new global architecture was discussed, with some reference to the various entry points afforded by different partners and members of the AC. As many members pointed out, the development community has been slow in absorbing lessons from the Rising Powers, although IDS is fortunate to have been at the forefront of thinking on this via the Asian Drivers programme ten years ago, followed by the new RPID programme. It is vital to extract the lessons learnt and good practices in order to influence policymaking in international development.

The Advisory Council concluded the meeting by discussing how future meetings would be chaired and called. The Council will have one permanent chair – Richard Manning – and rotating co-chairs to represent the diversity of the group and of the programme’s objectives and coverage. The AC agreed having a longer-term, 12- to 18-month timeline would be helpful, and agreed with Rômulo Paes’ suggestion of having few but very intensive working meetings where the AC would meet for 2–3 days (funding is available for three meetings over two years). The Council need to establish clear goals and outcomes, with a three-year expectancy on the types of outputs they would like by the end of the programme. The experience of Richard Carey and Li Xiaoyun in the China-DAC study group was similar and yielded very positive results.

4 International context and policy agenda overview: Advisory Council meeting with researchers

The following day, on the afternoon of 3 May 2012 after the DFID Learning Event, the Advisory Council held an informal session with IDS colleagues and BRICS researchers, who shared their preliminary proposals, developed during the group sessions on 2 May 2012.

The Advisory Council members were particularly interested in how the proposed work could consider issues around development policies and partnerships and the (re)emerging trends in South–South Cooperation. They also reflected on how a future research programme could better influence policy, identifying a number of key issues to be considered:

- Understanding the processes, definitions, implementation procedures, communication and social perceptions of this emerging context;
- Taking care to avoid overambitious research questions;
- Considering the added value of a particular proposal in terms of its target audience, for example policymakers, practitioners, researchers;
- Distinguishing between the *scoping studies* required by the Accountable Grant and *blue-sky* research or ‘pure’ research;
- Differentiating the various levels of engagement of the different BRICS countries in Africa, especially given the greater scale of China’s involvement;
- Reflecting on geographical scope and other contexts where research questions could apply beyond Africa;
- Considering the significance of social justice in relation to the proposed work.

Advisory Council members who are attending the IDS Board meeting will meet at IDS on 27 June 2012, joined via Skype by the rest of the AC members.

Annex 1 Complete participant list and biographies

Name	Institution
Partners	
Bianca Suyama	Articulação Sul
Laura Trajber Waisbich	CEBRAP – Brazilian Centre for Analysis and Planning
Marina Larionova	IORI-HSE – International Organisations Research Institute – Higher School of Economics
Yuriy Zaytsev	HSE – Higher School of Economics
Mark Rakhmangulov	IORI-HSE – International Organisations Research Institute – Higher School of Economics
Sachin Chaturvedi	RIS – Research & Information System for Developing Countries
Anuradha Chenoy	JNU – Jawaharlal Nehru University
Zhang Xiulan	BNU – Beijing Normal University
Janis Van der Westhuizen	SUN – University of Stellenbosch
Chris Alden	SAIIA – South African Institute of International Affairs
Qi Gubo	CAU – China Agricultural University
Huo Jianguo	CAITEC – Chinese Academy of International Trade & Economic Cooperation
Advisory Council	
Gabriele Koehler	Advisory Council
Richard Manning	Advisory Council
Rômulo Paes	Advisory Council
Merle Lipton	Advisory Council
Li Xiaoyun	Advisory Council
Rajesh Tandon	Advisory Council
KY Amoako	Advisory Council
Richard Carey	Advisory Council
IDS Fellows (Other Participants)	
Ammar Rashid	MA Candidate/Research Assistant
Felix Rottmann	MA Candidate/Research Assistant
Georgina Powell-Stephens	Accountable Grant coordinator
Ian Scoones	Research Fellow, Future Agricultures Consortium Co-convenor
Jaqueline Berumen	MA Candidate/Research Assistant
Jim Sumberg	Research Fellow, Accountable Grant director
Jixia Lu	Visiting Fellow (STEPS)
Lawrence Haddad	Director, IDS
Maria Persson	MA Candidate/Research Assistant
Mark Davies	Research Fellow, Centre for Social Protection manager
Melanie Punton	MA Candidate/Research Assistant
Richard Jolly	Honorary Professor and Research Associate
Sneha Palit	MA Candidate/Research Assistant

(Cont'd.)

Annex 1 (cont'd.)

Name	Institution
IDS BRICS	
Alex Shankland	Research Fellow, RPID Co-convenor, Civil Society/Brazil country lead
Anu Joshi	Research Fellow, India country lead
Deepta Chopra	Research Fellow, India country lead
Gerry Bloom	Research Fellow, Health lead
Hayley MacGregor	Research Fellow, South Africa lead
Jenny Constantine	Rising Powers research and communications consultant
Jeremy Allouche	Research Fellow, Global Policy component
John Humphrey	Professorial Fellow, Africa footprint lead
Linda Waldman	Research Fellow, South Africa lead
Lizbeth Navas-Aleman	Research Fellow, RPID Co-convenor, Business/Brazil country lead
Marc Berenson	Research Fellow, Russia country lead
Matthew Lockwood	Research Fellow, Climate Change Team Leader, Climate Policy lead
Robert Nurick	Director of Teaching, DSLP Lead
Rosalind Eyben	Research Fellow, Global Policy lead
Stacey Townsend	Globalisation Team administrator/Rising Powers workshop organiser
Xavier Cirera	Research Fellow, Africa footprint component
External Invitees	
Andrew Norton	ODI – Overseas Development Institute
Giles Mohan	OU – Open University
Gordon McGranahan	IIED – International Institute for Environment & Development
Laura Collins	University of Cambridge
Lila Buckley	IIED – International Institute for Environment & Development
Michel Carton	EADI – European Association for Development Institutes
Robin Hart	Wilton Park
Stephany Griffith-Jones	University of Columbia
DFID	
Aishah Afzal	Economist – Global Development Partnerships
Anthony Smith	International Relations Director
Chintán Makwanda	Policy Support
Elinor Wakefield	Emerging Powers policy adviser
Ella Carpenter	Transparency Adviser
Fran Drugan	Africa Policy Adviser
Karen Mahy	DFID India
Laura Kelly	Head of Global Development Partnerships Programme
Paul Wafer	Senior Policy Adviser (post-2015 interest)
Peter Gordon	Policy Division (responsible for IDS Accountable Grant)
Ranil Dissanayake	Economist – Strategy Unit
Chris Chalmers	DFID China
Billy Stewart	DFID India
Mike Ellis	DFID Brazil
Will Hines	DFID South Africa



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