



**SPACES FOR ENGAGEMENT:**  
*Using knowledge to improve public decisions*

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR AN ONLINE  
COURSE ON M&E OF POLICY INFLUENCE**

***SHARING LESSONS LEARNED IN LATIN AMERICA, ASIA  
AND AFRICA***

Launch of the call:

12/04/2012

Deadline for the reception of proposals:

06/05/2012

## 1. BACKGROUND

The project “Spaces for Engagement: Using knowledge to improve public decisions” is a [GDNet](#) initiative, implemented in Latin America by [CIPPEC](#). The program builds on the results of five years of intense work that aimed at improving the bridge between research and public policies. The project started by unifying efforts to strengthen the capacity of Latin American policy research institutes (PRIs) on their influence in public policies through diverse activities such as: research, practical handbooks, workshops, face to face meetings and virtual exchange of experiences in a Community of Practice (CoP).

A high amount of experiences and lessons learned have been developed in this CoP during these years. We believe it is not only useful but necessary to share them with other southern institutions in Africa and Asia. Not only organizations in these continents are concerned with all of these issues but also donors and international community are willing to know how to improve the link between research and governmental decisions in order to enhance public policies. Along these years an increasing interest on Policy influence has been identified among researchers, CSOs, experts, policy makers and universities. Some questions have emerged such as: Are we actually influencing policies? How can we measure and demonstrate it? How can we improve the use of our evidence in policymaking?

To answer to these and other questions we decided to explore and try to contribute to the development and/or improvement of how **policy influencing** is currently monitored and evaluated.

Indeed, there is a wide recognition that the way to influence public policy is sinuous and forked. Therefore, to track and understand what happened requires resources, time and efforts to systematize. Not surprisingly, the practices of monitoring and impact assessment are scarce in developing countries. However, incorporating these practices into the daily life of the PRIs is well worth it. The use of these tools can be a smart organizational strategy to enhance the impact of their research in public policy, which is an increasing concern of both the institutions and their donors. On the other hand, an effective M&E system can help them build their reputation and visibility, and attract more and better support to their work. In turn, the design of an M&E system can generate valuable knowledge for all members of the organization if it is implemented with a genuine interest in learning.

For all these reasons, we developed [Learners, practitioners and teachers: Handbook on monitoring, evaluating and managing knowledge for policy influence](#), from which we organized a regional workshop in Buenos Aires in 2010, "What do we know about our policy impact?"

Through an effective combination of theoretical modules and practical exercises, this course aims to help CSOs, policy research institutes and state officials detect their strengths and opportunities for implementing M&E of the policy influence activities. Based on these, we help them focus their advocacy efforts in the right direction, maximizing available resources and developing intelligent strategies, underpinned by a successful political reading. Courses help participants to devise viable M&E of the policy influence plans, which consequently lead to

greater impact. Debates and exchange of experiences among trainees are also promoted. Technical advice is provided by facilitators through detailed feedback on completed exercises (a total of 3 along the 6 weeks course). By the end of each course, it is hoped that the participants will be able to use the tools and knowledge acquired to help them design effective M&E systems, as well as promote internal change within their organizations.

So far, we have developed nine on line courses on critical issues for policy influence, six for Latin America and three for Asia and Africa, with 39 countries involved and 136 researchers, policy research institutes and civil society organizations trained.

Through this call, GDN and CIPPEC will support the participation of those who wish to expand their skills and knowledge on M&E of the policy influence. Scholarships will be given to participate in this course (limited quota).

## 2. OBJECTIVES

### 2.1 GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The general objective is to facilitate the immersion of researchers, trainers and members of PRIs on the importance and feasibility of monitoring and evaluating how evidence informs policy influence in their countries.

### 2.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Promote M&E of policy influence as part of the organizational culture. This can be applied to projects, programs or at the organizational level. During 6 weeks, we will work on modules that focus on the key components to design a plan for monitoring and evaluation of policy influence.

## 3. CONTENT

The course consists of six modules, which cover the main components of M&E of policy influence:

1. Introduction and overall approach to monitoring and evaluation of policy influence
2. Phase 1: Diagnosis for the design of a M&E system
3. Phase 2: Planning for the design of a M&E system
4. Phase 3: Development of indicators
5. Useful tools and other components of the plan
6. Is our plan to M&E policy influence feasible?

#### 4. DELIVERY OF THE PROPOSAL FOR THE PARTICIPATION

- a. Due to the fact that the quota for participation is limited, postulants must send a brief essay explaining the reasons that motivate them to participate and the utility they will give to the learned contents (maximum 2 pages).
- b. The document's cover must include: postulant's name and organization he/she belongs to (if pertinent).
- c. The document must be presented in A4 paper, using Book Antiqua font size 12 with simple space between lines and no more than 2 pages.
- d. A résumé or CV.
- e. A letter signed by the Executive Director of the organization in which the postulant undertakes to present the three mandatory exercise, complying with the established deadlines and to actively participate in the debates and exchanges that will be promoted in the course forum.

#### 5. SCHEDULE

Activity	Date
Deadline for postulant's presentation	May 6 <sup>th</sup> , 2012
Selection and notification of winners	May 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2012
Beginning of the course (duration: 6 weeks)	May 20 <sup>th</sup> , 2012

#### 6. CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Criteria to select the participants will include: 1) quality and relevance of the essay, 2) the experience of the postulant and/or his/her organization regarding public policy influence, 3) the commitment of the participant and organization to share with others the generated knowledge.

It is very important for the success, usefulness and dynamic of the course that the participants assume the compromise of making at least a weekly contribution, by participating in the forums, and sending materials or interesting information. The participants will be asked to present three different exercises through the course, and to submit the exercises on time (10 days are usually given between announcement and delivery of exercise). They will also be required to comment and make suggestions from other participant's exercises. The approximate time they will need to commit to read the material and prepare the exercises is between 8 and 10 hours a week. At the end of the course, participants will be requested to complete a written evaluation on different aspects of the course such as quality, usefulness, etc. that will allow tutors to improve future trainings.

## 7. REQUIREMENTS

- i. In order to be qualified to apply, all interested must be registered as members of GDNet ([www.gdnet.org](http://www.gdnet.org))<sup>1</sup>.
- ii. The reception of the document will be up until May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012 (7 pm GMT) via email to Julia D'Agostino ([jdagostino@cippec.org](mailto:jdagostino@cippec.org)).
- iii. Winners will be committed to read the material provided by the organizers, submit the exercises on time and have and actively participation in the forum of the course.

## 8. TESTIMONIALS

*I was able to apply the tools in the real field of policy. I used the theories and conceptual frameworks delivered in the training within the Child Health Now Campaign and shared new acquired skills with my field teams*

George William Ebulu, World Vision Uganda, Uganda

*The exercises have helped my team at office to sharpen our strategies as we work to enhance the use, supply and demand of eco-materials for social housing in India*

Zeenat Niazi, Development Alternatives Group, India

*My policy worldview has been radically transformed after this course - and this will be beneficial not only to me, but to my institute as well.*

Awuor Ponge, Institute of Policy Analysis and Research, Kenya

*This has been a very enriching experience for me; I never had much theoretical basis for what I do as communication practitioner*

Nazmatun Noor, Center for Policy Dialogue, Bangladesh

Contact us:

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<sup>1</sup> Those who are not registered can do it without costs.