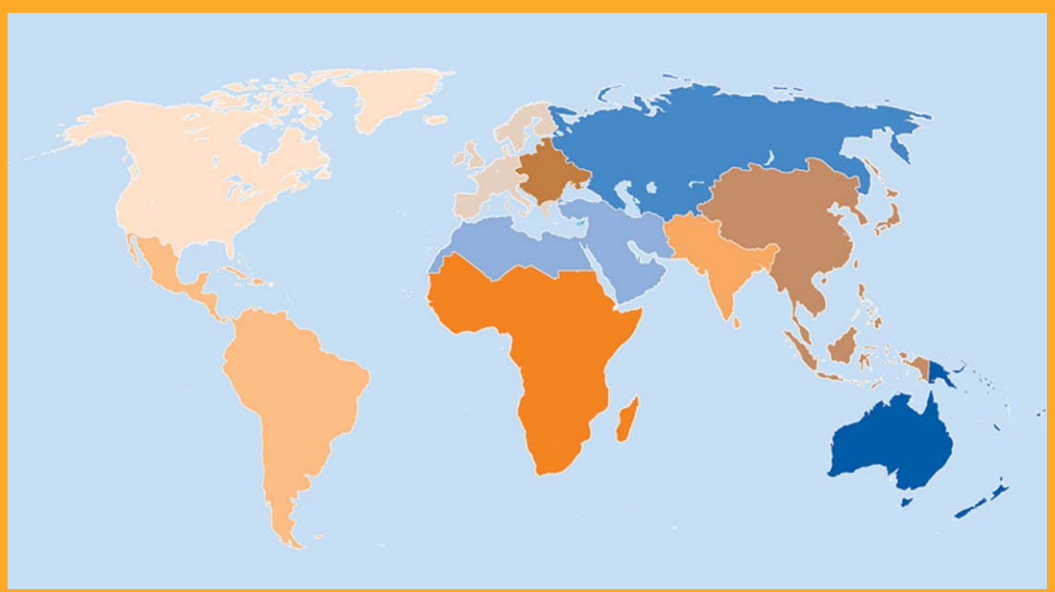
GPR

GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK



IEG
INDEPENDENT EVALUATION GROUP

GLOBAL PROGRAM REVIEW

Volume 3 Issue 2

THE WORLD BANK GROUP

WORKING FOR A WORLD FREE OF POVERTY

The World Bank Group consists of five institutions—the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the International Development Association (IDA), the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), and the International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID). Its mission is to fight poverty for lasting results and to help people help themselves and their environment by providing resources, sharing knowledge, building capacity, and forging partnerships in the public and private sectors.

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Global Development Network

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This volume is a product of the staff of the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) of the World Bank Group. It is part of an ongoing series that reviews global and regional partnership programs in which the World Bank is engaged as one of the partners. The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed in this volume do not necessarily reflect the views of the Executive Directors of The World Bank or the governments they represent.

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Cover image: World map showing GDN's Regional Network Partners.

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IEG Mission: Improving Development Results Through Excellence in Evaluation

The Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) of the World Bank reviews global and regional partnership programs (GRPPs) in which the Bank is engaged as one partner among many for two main purposes: (a) to provide accountability in the achievement of the program's objectives by providing an independent opinion of the program's effectiveness, and (b) to identify and disseminate lessons learned from the experience of individual GRPPs. The preparation of a global or regional program review (GPR) is contingent on a recently completed evaluation of the program, typically commissioned by the governing body of the program.

The first purpose includes validating the findings of the GRPP evaluation with respect to the effectiveness of the program, and assessing the Bank's performance as a partner in the program. The second purpose includes assessing the independence and quality of the GRPP evaluation itself and drawing implications for the Bank's continued involvement in the program. Assessing the quality of GRPP evaluations is an important aspect of GPRs, since encouraging more consistent evaluation methodology and practice across Bank-supported GRPPs is one of the reasons why IEG embarked on this new product in 2005.

IEG annually reviews a number of GRPPs in which the Bank is a partner. In selecting programs for review, preference is given to those that are innovative, large, or complex; those that are relevant to upcoming sector studies; those for which the Executive Directors or Bank management have requested reviews; and those that are likely to generate important lessons. IEG also aims for a representative distribution of GPRs across sectors in each fiscal year.

A GPR is a "review" and not a full-fledged "evaluation." It assesses the independence and quality of the relevant evaluation; provides a second opinion on the effectiveness of the program; assesses the performance of the Bank as a partner in the program; and draws lessons for the Bank's engagement in global and regional programs. The GPR does not formally rate the various attributes of the program.

A GPR involves a desk review of key documents, consultations with key stakeholders, and a mission to the program management unit (secretariat) of the program if this is located outside of the World Bank or Washington, DC. Key stakeholders include the Bank's representative on the governing body of the program, the Bank's task team leader (if separate from the Bank's representative), the program chair, the head of the secretariat, other program partners (at the governance and implementing levels), and other Bank operational staff involved with the program. The writer of a GPR may also consult with the person(s) who conducted the evaluation of the GRPP.

Each GPR is subject to internal IEG peer review, Panel review, and management approval. Once cleared internally, the GPR is reviewed by the responsible Bank department and the secretariat of the program. Comments received are taken into account in finalizing the document, and the formal management response from the program is attached as an annex to the final report. After the document has been distributed to the Bank's Board of Executive Directors, it is disclosed to the public on IEG's external Web site.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

3ie	International Initiative for Impact Evaluation
AERC	African Economic Research Consortium (GDN regional network partner)
CERGE-EI	Center for Economic Research and Graduate Education – Economics Institute (GDN regional network partner for Eastern and Central Europe)
CODE	Committee on Development Effectiveness (World Bank)
DEC	Development Economics Vice Presidency (World Bank)
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DGF	Development Grant Facility (World Bank)
EADN	East Asian Development Network (GDN regional network partner)
EERC	Economics Education and Research Consortium (GDN regional network partner for Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States)
ERF	Economic Research Forum (GDN regional partner in the Middle East and North Africa)
GDAMC	Global Development Awards and Medal Competition (GDN)
GDN	Global Development Network
GPR	Global Program Review
GRP	Global Research Project (GDN)
IDS	Institute for Development Studies (University of Sussex, UK)
IEG	Independent Evaluation Group (World Bank)
IRP	Inter-regional Research Project (GDN)
LACEA	Latin American and Caribbean Economic Association (GDN regional network partner)
MOU	Memorandum of understanding
ODN	Oceania Development Network (GDN regional network partner)
PREM	Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Vice Presidency and Network (World Bank)
RNP	Regional Network Partner (GDN)
RRC	Regional Research Competition (GDN)
SANEI	South Asia Network of Economic Research Institutes (GDN regional network partner)
TTL	Task team leader (World Bank)
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
VPU	Vice Presidential Unit (World Bank)

Fiscal Year of Program

July 1 to June 30

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Program at a Glance: Global Development Network

Start date	GDN was formally launched in December 1999 as a global program with its Secretariat located in the World Bank. It was spun-off as an independent not-for-profit organization based in Washington, DC, in March 2001, and then relocated to New Delhi, India, as an international organization in 2005.
Goal	GDN's overarching goal has been to promote the generation, sharing, and application to policy of multidisciplinary knowledge for the purpose of development.
Program objectives	GDN has had three core program (outcome) objectives: (1) to generate high-quality, policy-relevant development research from within developing and transitional countries (2) to build research and policy outreach capacity of researchers from those countries (3) to promote linkages between research and the policy-making process to foster better policies.
Activities	GDN has sponsored five core activities: regional research competitions, global research projects, an Annual Conference, a Global Development Awards and Medals Competition, and GDNet (a Web-based source of knowledge, information, and services). In FY09, GDN became the host for the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie).
WBG contributions	From fiscal year 1998 through fiscal year 2008, the Bank provided a total of $43.6 million to GDN, of which $41.6 million was in grants from the Development Grant Facility (DGF) and the other $2.0 million from Bank's administrative budget. Since leaving the World Bank, the DGF contribution to total GDN expenditures has declined from 75 percent in FY02 to 38 percent in FY08.
Other donor contributions	Currently, 12 bilateral aid agencies, one multilateral agency, and two foundations provide support for GDN's five main activities. Of those, two bilateral donors contribute core funding and the rest provide mainly project financing, or limited in-kind support.
Location	GDN is now an international organization headquartered in New Delhi, with offices in Cairo and Washington, DC. Established as a unit of the World Bank, GDN moved to independent quarters in Washington, DC, in 2001 and then to New Delhi in 2004.
Governance and management	GDN is governed by an Assembly — comprised of states and public organizations that are signatories to the GDN charter — and a Board of Directors — currently 18 individuals, 16 of whom are researchers from universities or research institutions in different regions and two of whom are senior representatives of GDN donor agencies, the World Bank and UNDP. There are three board subcommittees: executive, audit, and program. Day-to-day operations are managed by a GDN Secretariat, comprising a President and some 30 staff.
Latest program-level evaluation	*Evaluation of the Global Development Network, December 2007,* conducted by Marc D. Shapiro, principal investigator and managing partner of the private firm MDS Associates

Key Bank Staff Responsible during Period under Review

Position	Person	Period
Program Manager	Lyn Squire, Director	1999–2001
Global Program Task Team Leader	Ishac Diwan, Manager, WBI Jo Ritzen Ines Garcia-Thoumi Alan Winters, Director, DECRG Ivar Cederholm, Sr. RM Officer, DECRM	2000–2001 2001–2002 2002–2004 2004–2008 2008–present
World Bank Representative on the Board of Directors	Guillermo Perry, Chief Economist, LCR Alan Winters, Director, DECRG Alan Gelb, Director, Development Policy, DECVP	2002–2006 2006–2007 2007–present
Vice President	Kemal Dervis, PRM Gobind Nankini, PRM Francois Bourguignon, DEC Yifu Lin, DEC	1999–2001 2001–2004 2004–2008 June 2008–present
Trust Fund Operations	Arif Zulfiqar, Director	June 1999–September 2008
Global Programs and Partnerships	Margret Thalwitz, Director	May 2004–November 2008

Program Manager

Position	Person	Period
Director	Lyn Squire	1999–2001
Executive Director	Lyn Squire	2001–2005
President	Lyn Squire	2005–2007
President	Gobind Nankini	2007–March 2009

Glossary

Devolution or exit strategy	A proactive strategy to change the design of a program, to devolve some of its implementation responsibilities, to reduce dependency on external funding, or to phase out the program on the grounds that it has achieved its objectives or that its current design is no longer the best way to sustain the results which the program has achieved.
Efficacy	The extent to which the program has achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, taking into account their relative importance. The term is also used as a broader, aggregate measure — encompassing relevance and efficiency as well — of the overall outcome of a development intervention such as a GRPP.
Efficiency	The extent to which the program has converted or is expected to convert its resources/inputs (such as funds, expertise, time, etc.) economically into results in order to achieve the maximum possible outputs, outcomes, and impacts with the minimum possible inputs.
Evaluation	The systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing to completed policy, program, or project, its design, implementation, and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and achievement of its objectives, and its developmental effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability.
Governance	The structures, functions, processes, and organizational traditions that have been put in place within the context of a program's authorizing environment to ensure that the program is run in such a way that it achieves its objectives in an effective and transparent manner. It is the framework of accountability and responsibility to users, stakeholders and the wider community, within which organizations take decisions, and lead and control their functions, to achieve their objectives.
Impacts	Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.
Independent evaluation	An evaluation that is carried out by entities and persons free from the control of those involved in policy-making, management, or implementation of program activities. This entails organizational and behavioral independence, protection from interference, and avoidance of conflicts of interest.
Indicator	A quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect the changes connected to an intervention, or to help assess the performance of a development actor.
Legitimacy	As a criterion for assessing governance and management, the way in which governmental and managerial authority is exercised in relation to those with a legitimate interest in the program — including shareholders, other stakeholders, implementers, beneficiaries, and the community at large.
Logical framework or logframe	A management technique that is used to develop the overall design of a program or project, to improve implementation monitoring, and to strengthen evaluation, by presenting the essential elements of the program or project clearly and succinctly throughout its cycle. It is a "cause and effect" model which aims to establish clear objectives and strategies based on a results chain, to build commitment and ownership among the stakeholders during the preparation of the program or project, and to relate the program's or project's interventions to their intended outcomes and impacts for beneficiaries.
Management	The day-to-day operation of a program within the context of the strategies, policies, processes, and procedures that have been established by the governing body.

Monitoring	The continuous assessment of progress achieved during program implementation in order to track compliance with a plan, to identify reasons for noncompliance, and to take necessary actions to improve performance. Monitoring is usually the responsibility of program management and operational staff.
Outcomes	The achieved or likely short-term and medium-term effects of the outputs of a development intervention.
Oversight	One of the core functions of the governing body of a program: Monitoring the performance of the program management unit, appointing key personnel, approving annual budgets and business plans, and overseeing major capital expenditures.
Partners	In most IEG Global Program Reviews, partners are understood as stakeholders who are involved in the governance or financing of the program (including the members of the governing, executive, or advisory bodies).
Public goods	Goods which produce benefits that are non-rival (many people can consume, use, or enjoy the good at the same time) and non-excludable (it is difficult to prevent people who do not pay for the good from consuming it). If the benefits of a particular public good accrue across all or many countries, then the good is deemed a global or international public good.
Relevance	The extent to which the objectives and design of the program are consistent with (a) the current global/regional challenges and concerns in a particular development sector and (b) the needs and priorities of beneficiary countries and groups.
Shareholders	The subset of donors that are involved in the governance of the program. Therefore, this does not include individual (particularly anonymous) donors who choose not to be so involved, or who are not entitled to be involved if their contribution does not meet the minimum requirement, say, for membership on the governing body.
Stakeholders	The parties who are interested in or affected, either positively or negatively, by the program. Stakeholders are often referred to as “principal” and “other”, or “direct” and “indirect”. While other or indirect stakeholders — such as taxpayers in both donor and beneficiary countries, visitors to a beneficiary country, and other indirect beneficiaries — may have interests as well, these are not ordinarily considered in evaluations unless a principal stakeholder acts as their proxy.
Sustainability	When the term is applied to the **activities of a program**, the extent to which the benefits arising from these activities are likely to continue after the activities have been completed. When the term is applied to **organizations or programs** themselves, the extent to which the organization or program is likely to continue its operational activities over time.
Transparency	As a criterion for assessing governance and management, the extent to which a program’s decision-making, reporting, and evaluation processes are open and freely available to the general public. This is a metaphorical extension of the meaning used in physical sciences — a “transparent” objective being one that can be seen through.

Source: For evaluation terms, the *Sourcebook for Evaluating Global and Regional Partnership Programs: Indicative Principles and Standards*, Independent Evaluation Group – World Bank, 2007.

Preface

This is the Global Program Review (GPR) of the Global Development Network (GDN). Established in 1999 as a global partnership program with a secretariat located in the World Bank, it was spun off as an independent not-for-profit organization based in Washington, DC, in 2001 and then relocated to New Delhi, India, as an international organization in 2004. GDN's overarching goal has been to promote the generation, sharing, and application to policy of multidisciplinary knowledge for the purpose of development. To accomplish this, GDN has focused on three core program objectives: (1) generating high-quality, policy-relevant research in developing and transition countries; (2) building research and policy outreach capacity among researchers in those countries to improve the quality and expand the policy influence of their work on a national and international level; and (3) promoting greater linkages between researchers and the policy process to foster effective, evidence-based policy-making.

GDN has a notable record of external and internal evaluations for a relatively young organization. This GPR is based on the most recent external evaluation, which was commissioned by the GDN Board of Directors and completed by a small team of external consultants in 2007. The GPR assesses the independence and quality of the 2007 evaluation, provides a second opinion on the effectiveness of GDN's work, assesses the performance of the World Bank as a partner in GDN, and draws some lessons for GDN and for the Bank's engagement in global programs more generally.

GDN was chosen for a GPR because the World Bank has been heavily involved in the program as founder, major donor, and Board member. The Bank has provided financial support through the long-term financing window of the Development Grant Facility (Window 1), provided the leadership of the Secretariat, and participated in the organization's Annual Conferences and other activities. GDN is the major global partnership program in which the Bank's Development Economics Vice Presidency (DEC) is involved.

This review follows IEG's Evaluation Framework for Global Program Reviews (Annex A). It is based on a desk review of the 2007 evaluation report and other GDN documents (annual reports, internal documents, strategy papers, etc.), a mission to the GDN Secretariat in New Delhi, interviews with key stakeholders (Board members, Regional Network Partners, donors, and World Bank staff), and a workshop with development policy analysts and practitioners.

IEG gratefully acknowledges all those who made their time available for interviews and provided useful information and insights into the program. It wishes to especially acknowledge the availability of GDN staff and their cooperation in providing all necessary information and documents. The complete list of people consulted can be found in Annex F.

Following IEG's normal procedures, copies of the draft GPR were sent to GDN, to the Bank's global program task team leader, to DECRG (which is responsible for the Bank's engagement with GDN), and to other World Bank units that have responsibility for the Bank's involvement with global programs more generally. Their comments have been taken into account in finalizing the GPR. The formal response received from GDN management is attached in Annex G.

Summary

1. The World Bank initiated the Global Development Network (GDN) in the late 1990s to increase the output of high-quality, policy-relevant research from developing and transition countries that could feed into local policy-making. Since then, the Bank has remained heavily involved as a major donor and a member of GDN's governing board.

2. This IEG review assesses the relevance and effectiveness of GDN over its 10-year history and the Bank's performance as a major partner. In making this assessment, the review draws on two independent evaluations of GDN (in 2004 and 2007) and other internal and external assessments of specific aspects of the program. It also incorporates views on developments since 2007 obtained through interviews conducted in late 2008 with some 30 key GDN stakeholders (notably representatives of regional network partners, donor agencies, GDN Board members, and GDN Secretariat staff) as well as views provided in a workshop of development policy analysts and practitioners.

GDN's Status, Objectives, and Activities

3. GDN has undergone a rapid and successful institutional transformation. Established in 1999 as an internal unit of the Bank, GDN is now an independent international organization located in New Delhi, India.

4. Throughout this institutional transformation, GDN's main objectives and activities have remained constant. As stated in its charter, GDN's overarching goal is to promote the generation, sharing, and application to policy of multidisciplinary knowledge for the purpose of development. To accomplish this overarching goal, GDN focuses on three core program objectives (outcomes): (1) to generate high-quality, policy-relevant research in developing and transition countries; (2) to build research and policy outreach capacity among researchers in those countries to improve the quality and expand the policy influence of their work on a national and international level; and (3) to promote greater linkages between researchers and the policy process to foster effective, evidence-based policy-making.

5. In pursuit of these program objectives, GDN sponsors five main activities (outputs):

- ***Regional research competitions (RRCs)*** are funded with annual grants from GDN to eight Regional Network Partners (RNPs) and support the work of development researchers in developing and transition countries.
- ***Global research projects (GRPs)*** — which GDN organizes and funds centrally — examine aspects of development and typically involve case studies in multiple countries by teams of 30–80 researchers from across two or more regions.
- ***Global Development Awards and Medal Competitions (GDAMCs)*** annually award a total of about $300,000 for outstanding research and innovative development projects by researchers and development practitioners from developing and transition countries.
- ***Annual Conferences,*** which involve about 500 participants yearly, provide a global forum for the exchange of ideas on a broad topic among developing country

researchers, policymakers, and donors as well as an opportunity for researchers to showcase their work.

- ***GDNet***, a Web-based activity, showcases the work of developing and transition country researchers, provides them with a package of online services, and helps build the communications capacity of research institutions to enhance the policy influence of their research.

GDN's Program Relevance and Achievements

6. For a relatively young organization, GDN has a notable record of external and internal evaluations. Also notable is GDN's transparency and responsiveness in regard to the evaluations' findings and recommendations. Overall, the evidence on GDN's effectiveness from these various sources is rather thin — reflecting in part the inherent difficulty of assessing activities aimed at building research capacity and influencing policy and in part GDN weaknesses in setting and tracking clear and monitorable outcome objectives. Using the available evidence, this IEG review finds, overall, that GDN's relevance is moderately strong, its record of outputs is strong, and its achievement of program outcome objectives is moderate, with notable shortcomings.

7. ***Relevance.*** The relevance of GDN's overarching objective was high at the outset of the program and remains high today. Its objective of generating research from within developing and transitional countries is widely viewed as responsive to a need for such work to inform national policies and strengthen the voice of these countries in global policy-making. Historically, most development research has come from outside developing countries. Funding for developing country research is in short supply: little support comes from governments or other domestic sources and international research support is most often for inputs into international policies and practices.

8. Conceptually, GDN is also well designed for pursuing its objective. Its reach is global in scope, involving researchers and partner institutions from all regions of the world. Its program is wholly focused on promoting developing and transition country research. It is structured as a "network of networks" (as distinct from a global think tank) to maximize the benefits of sharing knowledge and research experience across regions. Also, it conducts a menu of activities as a way to achieve its three program objectives.

9. Yet, this review of GDN finds substantial weaknesses in the translation of its design into practice. Notably, GDN has never stated clearly the extent to which its goal is to address inadequacies that are due to a shortage of development-related research, poor quality research, or inadequate policy relevance of existing work; nor has it identified where its specific comparative advantage lies in relation to these inadequacies. As a result, there is a continuing lack of consensus among key stakeholders on the relative importance of its three objectives of increased high-quality research output, research capacity building, and policy outreach, and lack of consensus on the relative emphasis that each of its activities should give to these objectives. Also, as discussed further below, although GDN has put time and resources into conducting a menu of activities, it has not developed explicit, state-of-the art strategies that incorporate these activities into systematic approaches for advancing each of its three program objectives, nor has it developed a logical (results) framework for guiding

and tracking the effectiveness of its work. Moreover, GDN has not adequately defined the mutual responsibilities and working relationships of its Secretariat and RNPs in the design and implementation of GDN-supported activities.

10. ***Program achievements.*** GDN's output record is strong in each of its five areas of activity. Notably:

- Through FY08, GDN provided funding for over 800 research grants through the competitive RRCs, with varying effectiveness across regions and across GDN's three program objectives.
- So far, GDN has completed four GRPs, and, at the end of 2008, had four other GRPs ongoing. The success of the GRPs has varied across projects and has been stronger in generating knowledge than in building the capacity of researchers.
- As of 2008, a total of over 4,000 participants from some 100 countries had attended the eight Annual Conferences convened since 1999, of which close to 70 percent were from developing and transition countries. The conferences have enabled more networking among researchers from around the world than contact between researchers and policymakers
- Nearly 4,300 individuals from over 100 countries have participated in GDN's awards and medals competitions to date. In 2007, the competition attracted more than 600 applicants. But there is little evidence of the impact of these awards on individuals' careers or their policy influence.
- GDN's Web-based activity, GDNet, now provides online access to some 14,000 research papers from developing and transition countries. It also provides a package of online services for developing country researchers and research institutes, but has not yet realized its aim of enhancing the policy outreach of GDN-supported researchers and their work.

11. Based on this output record, GDN is now planning to expand its range of activities to include training programs, strengthen efforts to link research to policy-making, and build the capacity of research institutions. While it is too soon to evaluate any of these new activities, it is apparent that they represent a substantial increase in the level and scope of GDN's program. Thus, two key questions for GDN going forward are (a) how to ensure that its new activities reinforce rather than distract from the contribution of its existing core activities to achieving GDN's intended outcomes and (b) how to monitor and evaluate program outcomes.

12. So far, the progress on advancing GDN's outcome objectives appears to be much more modest than the record of outputs. Overall, evaluations show some "moderate evidence" of achievements in advancing two of GDN's three objectives — increased high-quality, policy-relevant research and enhanced research capacity — and very limited progress in advancing its third aim of informing policy-making.

- **Generation of high quality, policy-relevant research.** GDN's strongest record to date is supporting increased amounts of development research from within developing and transitional countries. GDN-funded research has also led to an increase in the dissemination of that work through papers, journal articles, and books. But, there is not sufficient cumulative evidence to be able to assess the overall

quality, newness, or policy relevance of the research output, nor to know if the research has improved in quality and policy relevance over GDN's 10 years of operation. The 2007 evaluation of GDN did not attempt to examine even a sample of the reports and publications that had been produced to assess the quality and newness of GDN-funded research or the policy relevance of the work.

- **Research capacity building.** Combined findings on the effectiveness of GDN's five activities indicate that GDN has been moderately effective in building research capacity at the individual level. In addition, survey data from 2005 and 2007 suggest a modest increase in GDN's contribution to building research capacity over time. For example, grantees report stronger publication records emanating from their grants and prizes in 2007 as compared to 2005. But the 2007 evaluation found no corroborating evidence of positive capacity-building effects from RRCs or GRPs using other evaluative measures. It also noted that the mentoring process during the course of the RRCs and GRPs — seen by GDN as a major feature of its capacity-building effort — had declined since 2005 and was of widely varying effectiveness across regions. The dominant view of interviewees for this IEG review is similar: while all interviewees agreed that capacity building is a key objective of GDN, most stated that the capacity-building effort is not systematically designed. This suggests that if GDN is now going to expand its capacity-building effort (through training and support for research institutions), it ought to do so not as stand-alone additions to current activities, but as part of the development of a comprehensive capacity-building strategy.

- ***Informing policy.*** While the 2007 evaluation concluded that GDN's aim of "influencing policy" was unrealistic for a research capacity-building program, it stated that GDN could claim to be building a cadre of professionals capable of informing the policy process in support of better policy-making. But it also reported that stakeholders rate GDN's contribution to "facilitating contacts with policy-makers" lower on average than its other contributions to individual capacity building and lower than reported in 2005. A similar conclusion emerged from a separate GDNet evaluation that found that while GDNet is a key means for enhancing the policy outreach of GDN-supported research, it needs to narrow the gap between this purpose and its current outputs. In sum, GDN's efforts to strengthen the policy relevance of research training and output remains weak.

13. On the whole, this IEG review finds that to make greater progress, GDN needs to shift its strategic planning from outputs to outcomes in the design and implementation of its activities. It also needs to develop more strategic approaches to advancing its core program objectives.

Organizational Efficiency, Governance, and Sustainability

14. Overall, GDN has handled resource allocations, administrative costs, and financial management efficiently. For example:

- It has dealt efficiently with considerable volatility in the availability of annual revenues. Activities were scaled up or down to match available funds year by year,

and primary activities were funded to a level deemed satisfactory to key stakeholders even if not at levels planned.

- Its own cost-effectiveness assessment indicates that it operates at relatively low cost compared to several other research institutions of similar or larger size.
- An independent assessment of GDN's financial management gave GDN's practices an overall satisfactory rating, although it found that GDN did not have adequate processes in place to ensure proper use of sub-grants awarded by its RNPs. GDN has since implemented corrective actions recommended by the financial management assessment.

15. Still, three institutional features have hampered program effectiveness — GDN's governance structure, working relations with its RNPs, and uncertain financial sustainability. Though GDN made some improvements in these areas after its first independent evaluation in 2004, further improvements are still needed as acknowledged in GDN's 2008 Strategic Review and proposed actions approved by its Board.

16. ***Governance.*** GDN's Board, which is the organization's main governing body, has become increasingly effective over time. This development is a result of GDN's shift to independent status and to the establishment of three Board committees (executive, program, and audit) in 2005. Also, in response to the 2007 evaluation, which suggested further strengthening of Board oversight, GDN is moving to build greater transparency into the process of choosing board members and greater board experience in managing organizations. Even so, this IEG review sees two unresolved governance problems. First, there is a potential for a conflict of interest posed by the Board members who are nominated by regional network partners and are in an ambiguous position of representing the interests of their specific regions as well as exercising rigorous oversight of the performance of GDN overall. Second, the regional network partners are not members of the Board and therefore are not principally and directly engaged in GDN's research agenda-setting function currently carried out by the Board. One possible alternative approach might be to focus the business of the board on oversight and strategic direction and establish a separate research advisory body (including the heads of the RNPs) with responsibility for setting GDN's research and capacity-building agenda.

17. ***Working relations with RNPs.*** Conceived as "a network or networks," GDN works with 11 RNPs, 9 of which are in developing and transition regions and 2 in developed regions. The prevailing view across GDN stakeholders is that the RNPs are GDN's strength and the cornerstone of the program. Yet, the RNPs, other stakeholders, and the 2004 and 2007 evaluations share the view that the working relationship between GDN and the RNPs is not well developed. In particular, GDN needs to do better in dealing with the variations in the capacity and performance of the different RNPs in building research excellence and informing policy — especially in the case of the newer RNPs for whom GDN is a relatively significant source of support. It needs to strengthen its global services to the RNPs where there is potential for effectiveness and efficiency gains through such undertakings as cross-regional capacity building, standard setting, and fund-raising. It also needs to adjust how it operates to increase the RNP's voice in the design and implementation of GDN activities — thus making them true partners.

18. In the past year, GDN's management and Board have acted to make the deepening of relations with RNPs a major focus of GDN's plans for the next several years. Two new steps have been the initiation of inter-regional research projects and GDN/RNP jointly funded activities. In interviews for this IEG review, RNP coordinators commended these and other recent efforts. Given stakeholder views and evaluation findings about the relevance, comparative advantage, and effectiveness of GDN in promoting and disseminating research for better policy-making, there would seem to be no higher priority for the organization in the coming years than to move effectively in this area.

19. ***Financial sustainability.*** GDN has improved its financial position in recent years by mobilizing larger and more diversified sources of funding. In 2008, GDN received a total of $8.7 million from some 16 donors compared to $7.0 million from some 11 donors in 2005. This increase included first-time support in 2007 from seven new donors to GDN. This is a notable improvement over the earlier period 2005–07, when it experienced a three-year decline in funds (due primarily to reduced support from the World Bank not compensated for by increased or new funding from others). Still, GDN faces a funding situation characterized by five difficult features:

- Continuing dependence on some 2–3 donors (including the World Bank) for over 65 percent of total resources. The Bank continues to be the largest donor, even after 10 years.
- Many small donors, entailing high transaction costs for GDN management
- Low levels of support from private and developing country sources
- High risks of losing some donors in any year (for example, the government of Italy in 2006)
- Very high rigidity in the uses to which funding can be put, with the bulk linked to specific projects and only limited core (fungible) support for such things as strengthening its interactions with RNPs and integrating its activities in effective ways.

20. While this IEG review finds that on the whole GDN has been moving in the right direction to increase its effectiveness since the 2007 evaluation, this movement may now be at risk. The resignation of the previous president in March 2009 (after less than two years in that position) and his replacement effective mid-August 2009 leaves open questions about how far and how fast any changes will now be made.

The World Bank's Performance as a Major GDN Partner

21. The World Bank has provided important financial and technical support to GDN since its founding. Over fiscal years 1998–2008, the Bank has contributed a total of some $45.6 million to GDN, the bulk in the form of successive DGF grants. Active Bank staff members have served on GDN's board, and active and retired staff have so far provided the leadership of the Secretariat and regularly participated in the organization's Annual Conferences and research activities, thereby providing valued strategic guidance and technical assistance. Yet, Bank performance in the strategic direction and oversight of GDN has been inadequate. The inadequacy in Bank oversight is evidenced, for example, by the difficulty encountered by this IEG review in obtaining internal records regarding Bank

participation and GDN activities. Moreover, by assuming a position on the Board, the Bank has a responsibility to push for strategic clarity and direction, and it is implicated in the GDN's weakness in this regard.

22. Also, the Bank has lacked a sound funding strategy. GDN remains heavily dependent on Bank financing not only in dollar amounts, but also because the Bank is one of only three sources of core support (the other two at much lower levels) and the main source of GDN support to local researchers through the RRCs. This continued dependence suggests a lack of realism on the part of the Bank about its ability to leverage other donor resources, or a lack of sufficient effort by the Bank's senior management and representative on the Board to help GDN mobilize resources. Notably, while GDN's budget shows a reduction in the percentage of Bank support of from 75 percent in 2002 to 38 percent in 2008, GDN has not been successful in mobilizing other (non-Bank) funding equal to 85 percent of the program's budget — which is the DGF target guideline for ongoing program financing. Rather this target has repeatedly been set and then ignored as a condition for successive DGF funding of GDN. Moreover, the Bank does not have an explicit strategy for exiting from its partnership with GDN, nor an appropriate approach to the design of such a strategy. Those responsible for overseeing the partnership contend that it is too soon to set out such a strategy. They argue that GDN is still young and it typically takes 15–20 years for an organization of its kind to become fully established. Yet, the Bank's thinking about an exit strategy seems to focus mainly on the timing of Bank withdrawal, rather than on how the Bank should assist GDN and its RNPs in developing and implementing a resource mobilization strategy for achieving long-term sustainability. While the Bank may not choose to play this role in all partnerships in which it participates, certainly for a global partnership of its "invention" it needs to commit itself to a major engagement in securing the initiative's financial sustainability. Setting and then ignoring guidelines for continued funding is not an adequate approach.

Lessons Learned

23. The review of GDN's relevance and effectiveness highlights six main lessons, of which four are relevant to design and implementation of global programs and two are relevant to the Bank's support of such programs.

24. ***Effectiveness depends on having a theory of change and explicit strategies for achieving outcome objectives.*** GDN's moderate performance to date highlights that having well-articulated theory of change and related operational strategies for achieving intended program results (especially when the intended results — such as capacity building and policy influence — are not easy to quantify or attribute directly to program activities).

25. ***Global networks require well-defined roles and responsibilities for their constituent parts.*** GDN rests on the assumption that there is knowledge to be gained and cost-efficiencies to be achieved by promoting research collaboration on a global scale across regions. But its experience shows the shortcomings of operating with limited interaction across regional network partners and limited support from the center for the differing needs of the regions. GDN's maximum value added would come from operating as a true network of networks that addresses these shortcomings.

26. ***It is difficult to design and implement a coherent global program without a substantial level of core funding.*** Increasing revenues have enabled GDN to expand its support of developing world research and voice. But the dominance of earmarked funding impedes GDN's ability to support its regional partners and to design and link activities in ways that could best advance its threefold objectives of research generation, capacity building, and policy outreach.

27. ***There are weaknesses in a governance arrangement in which the governing board is responsible for setting the program's research agenda as well as for exercising overall strategic direction and oversight of program performance.*** By both setting and overseeing GDN's research agenda, its Board risks shorting its broader strategic stewardship role and obscuring the voice of the program's target beneficiaries in defining what is needed to achieve core objectives. Although GDN's governing board has become more efficient in recent years, issues of broad strategic direction and financial sustainability would seem to require more Board attention, while choices of GRP and other research activities might be better left to a non-Board research advisory body (including the management heads of the RNPs among others).

28. ***A realistic commitment by the Bank is required in establishing a donor-dependent program that seeks to advance a long-term objective.*** GDN's financing history suggests that timetables for the reduction of World Bank support need to be better calibrated to the nature of specific programs than is currently the case with DGF guidelines. It also suggests that exit strategies should be devised from the outset that not only set out a schedule for termination of Bank support, but also specify the extent of the Bank's commitment to helping the organization plan and achieve its long-term financial sustainability commensurate with the Bank's interest in the program.

29. ***The Bank needs to develop strengthened guidelines for its participation, and the accountability of its performance, in global partnerships.*** The Bank's accountability of its partnership role has been weak throughout the life of GDN. This weakness has been evidenced by repeated and exaggerated expectations in seeking DGF funding; poor record keeping; and understatements in progress reports of GDN's lack of clarity and strategic direction in achieving its intended outcomes. This problem has been particularly severe in the case of a global program such as GDN, which has been founded and funded by the Bank and on which the Bank has served as a member of the governing board — thereby creating a tension for the Bank's representative between responsibility to the organization and to the Bank as donor. The Bank's engagement with GDN demonstrates the need for clear guidelines especially in regard to (a) standards of program design and performance to be expected in situations of continuing Bank support, and (b) the roles and responsibilities to be exercised by Bank program managers, task team leaders, and representatives on partnership boards.

1. Program Objectives, Activities, and Costs

Program Origin and Objectives

1.1 ***Origin.*** The World Bank conceived the idea of a global development network in the late 1990s as a response to a perceived paucity of support for development research emanating from developing and transition countries. Following a series of meetings and consultations on researchers' needs and how to meet them, the World Bank formally launched GDN in 1999 at an international conference in Germany. Established initially as an internal unit of the Bank, GDN was incorporated in March 2001 as an independent, non-profit institution, based in Washington, DC. In 2005, GDN relocated to New Delhi, India, and changed its legal status to that of an international organization. The following timeline highlights the key events in its organizational history.

Table 1. GDN Timeline

1997	The World Bank establishes, as a internal unit, a global network of researchers and policy institutions
1999	While still a unit of the World Bank, GDN is launched at its first annual conference, held in Bonn, Germany
2000	GDN launches its first Global Research Project, "Explaining Growth"
2001	GDN is incorporated as a nonprofit organization independent of the World Bank and establishes an office in Washington, D.C.
2001	GDNet is launched
2001	GDN holds its third annual conference, the first in a developing country
2005	GDN headquarters are moved to New Delhi, India
2006	GDNet moves to offices in Cairo
2007	GDN's second president assumes office
2008	GDN becomes an international organization

1.2 ***Goal and Objectives.*** From the outset, GDN has defined its overarching goal broadly. As stated in its charter, "GDN, a worldwide association of research and policy institutions, promotes the generation, sharing and application to policy of multidisciplinary knowledge for the purpose of development."[1] Underlying this mission is the premise that better research from within developing and transition countries is necessary for better policy-making and that researchers in developing and transition countries need both financial and advisory support to increase the output of high-quality research relevant to key policy issues.

1. While this statement appears on GDN's Web site and in some other formal documentation, variations of it also exist, reflecting a lack of clarity in its outcome objectives, which is discussed below in the sections on GDN's relevance and its effectiveness. In particular, while some statements insert capacity building into GDN's overarching goal, others refer to capacity building as one of three program objectives.

1.3 To achieve this overarching goal, GDN has three core program objectives:

- Generate high-quality, policy-relevant research in developing and transition countries.
- Build research and policy outreach capacity among researchers in those countries to improve the quality and expand the policy influence of their work on a national and international level.
- Promote greater linkages between researchers and the policy process to foster effective, evidence-based policy-making.[2]

Activities

1.4 GDN sponsors five core activities, each intended to promote the three program objectives to varying degrees. The five activities are:

- Regional Research Competitions (RRCs)
- Global Research Projects (GRPs)
- Global Development Awards and Medal Competitions (GDAMCs)
- Annual Conference
- GDNet

While GDN has undertaken these five activities from the outset, it has altered their level and share of expenditures over time. Specifically, the budget expenditures for GRPs and GDNet have increased, while expenditures for the Annual Conference and GDAMCs have declined slightly and those for the RRCs declined and then reverted to a higher level in recent years, as shown in Figure 1.[3]

THE REGIONAL RESEARCH COMPETITIONS (RRCS)

1.5 GDN provides grants annually to eight Regional Network Partners (RNPs) to support the work of development researchers in developing and transition countries. In turn, the RNPs, which are independently functioning entities, award sub-grants to researchers and institutions in their respective regions on a competitive basis.[4] GDN's stated aim of these annual RRCs is to support policy-relevant research projects that advance new knowledge, increase individual research capacity, and help to discover new talent.[5] To foster the sharing of the resulting research, GDN requires all working papers from the research it helps fund to be posted on GDNet.

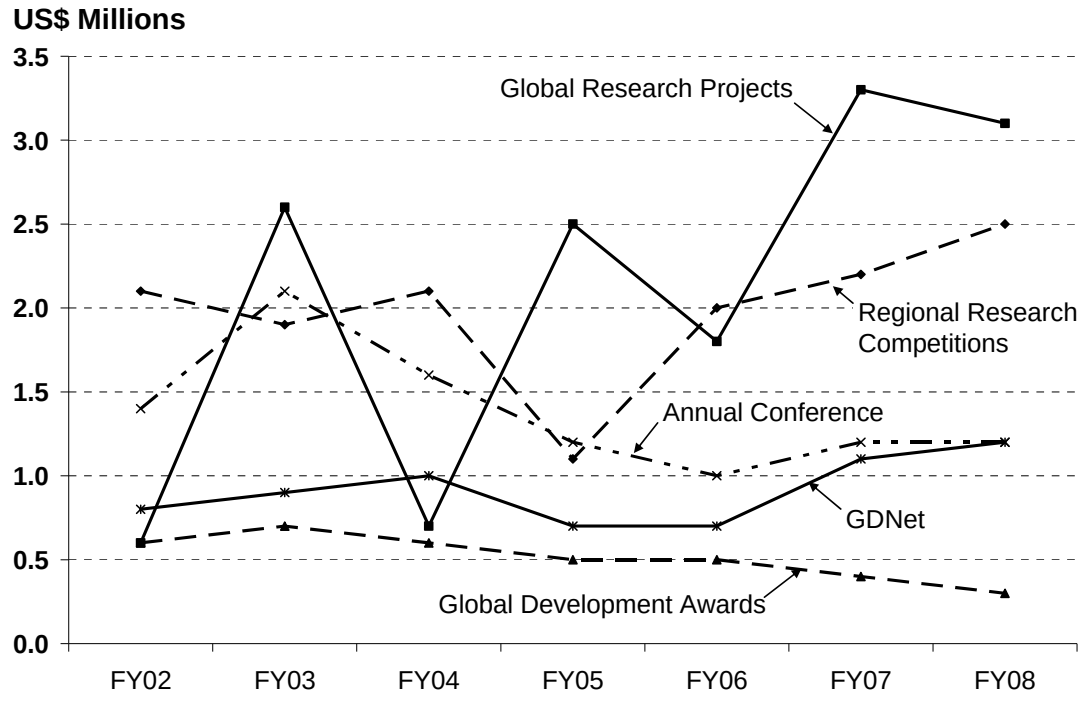
2. As each of these objectives has been stated variously in different documentation, the wording here is a best attempt by this review to capture GDN's intent.

3. In the last 18 months GDN has also begun to develop two new sets of activities: (1) a portfolio of training programs to build individual skills and strengthen the link between research and policy and (2) a program of institutional capacity building in Africa. While these efforts are too new to review for their effectiveness, the significance of GDN's expansion in these directions is discussed in the sections on relevance and efficiency.

4. See Table 2 on p. 7 for a list of the RNPs and their shares of the allocation of RRC funding from GDN in fiscal year 2007.

5. GDN Web site (www.gdnet.org).

Figure 1. GDN Expenditures on Five Core Program Activities, FY02–08



Source: Annex E, Table E-1.

1.6 From inception through FY08, GDN has contributed in this way to over 800 research grants across developing and transition regions. This activity, funded largely by contributions to GDN from the World Bank, has accounted for some 29 percent of total GDN program expenses for its five main activities over the period FY02–08.

1.7 GDN uses a decentralized approach for the management of its RRCs. While it requires that regional partners follow standards of transparency and a competitive process in the awarding of grants, each RNP has latitude in selecting thematic emphases and setting procedures and guidelines for the use of the GDN-provided funds. This approach has resulted in wide variation in the range of topics addressed and the nature and extent of mentoring and other capacity-building support provided to researchers. For example, rather than making research grants to individuals as most of the RNPs do, LACEA, which is an association of individuals, uses its allocation of GDN funds to support a range of services considered beneficial to the research work of their individual members, such as an annual conference, topic-specific smaller meetings of researchers, and publication of a journal aimed at directing research to policymakers. In another example, CERGE–EI provides varied kinds and intensity of mentoring and feedback to researchers based on their levels of experience.

1.8 A new, related activity was launched in 2008 in which two or more RNPs collaborate in conducting joint research on a topic of common interest. An additional allocation of $500,000 has been earmarked for the initial round of these Inter-regional Research Projects (IRPs). As of the writing of this report, four proposals had been received.

THE GLOBAL RESEARCH PROJECTS (GRPS)

1.9 These projects — which GDN organizes and funds centrally — examine aspects of development through a comprehensive and comparative approach. Among the topics that GRPs have addressed are as follows: the impact of rich countries' policies on poverty, varieties of governance, migration's economic and social impacts, and bridging research and policy. Typically, the projects undertake case studies in multiple countries and involve teams of 30 to 80 researchers from across two or more regions. The projects have tended to be financed by one or two donors with earmarked funds. In total, they account for some 30 percent of GDN's total budget expenses from FY02–08. Annex B provides a brief description of each of the GRPs undertaken to date.

1.10 Since 2007, GDN has engaged in four "Strategic Research Partnerships" that it views as consistent with its core program objectives and for which it serves as the implementing agency or partner agency. These Strategic Research Partnerships, which are all ongoing, have been initiated either by GDN or by a specific funder or group of funders. Examples of the focus of these new efforts are: institutional capacity building in Africa, improving public expenditure analysis, and promoting development impact evaluation. In the case of the latter example, GDN has established a partnership with the multidonor funded International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie) and is providing it with an initial home. Although these Strategic Research Partnerships are too new to assess, it appears that while they offer potential opportunities to advance GDN's objectives, they also pose a risk of diverting GDN from its other core activities. So far, GDN's Board has endorsed some initiatives and rejected others which it viewed as too far afield from the program's core business. But the Board has not taken the further step of articulating guidance or criteria for entering into such partnerships.

GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT AWARD AND MEDAL COMPETITIONS

1.11 Launched in 2000, the GDAMCs provide about $300,000 annually in awards to researchers and development practitioners from developing and transition countries. There are three categories of annual awards: (1) funding for outstanding research in any of five pre-selected topics, with a first prize of $30,000 and second prize of $5,000; (2) medals for research to individuals under the age of 46, with a first prize of $10,000 and second prizes of $5,000 in each of the five topics; and (3) awards of varying sizes for innovative development projects with potential for major impact in local communities, managed by institutions in developing or transition countries. GDN intends these awards to be a main means of identifying and showcasing new talent and advancing multidisciplinary development research. With support from the Government of Japan through its PHRD trust fund administered by the World Bank, this activity has accounted for some 7 percent of total GDN program expenses from FY02–08.

ANNUAL CONFERENCES

1.12 A leading activity in terms of budget resources and staff time, the Annual Conferences provide a global forum for the exchange ideas on a broad topic. For example, in 2007 the Annual Conference focused on "Security and Development" and in 2008 on "Natural Resources and Development." The Annual Conferences also provide for networking among researchers from all regions of the world, policymakers, civil society representatives, and donors. They provide an opportunity for grantees and award-winning researchers and

practitioners to showcase their work. In addition, they serve as a setting for research workshops, meetings of the board of directors, donors, and RNP coordinators — separately and together.

1.13 Held each year in a different region, these typically involve about 500 participants. Funding for the Annual Conferences, which has come from a variety of donors over the years, accounted for some 20 percent of total GDN program expenses from FY02–08.

GDNET

1.14 GDN launched this Web-based activity to serve three purposes: (1) assist researchers and research institutions in developing and transition countries to link to a global network to showcase their work; (2) provide them access to resources to support their work; and (3) help build the communications capacity of research institutions to enhance the policy influence of research. To meet these aims, GDNet serves as a depository of research output from the developing world. It provides registered developing country researchers with online access to a variety of tools and services, notably free access to databases and journals, information on research funding opportunities, and a researcher profile. In addition, in recent years GDNet has offered training and professional support in knowledge management to interested RNPs and helped with the establishment of "regional windows" that target information to regional constituencies.

1.15 In its early years, GDNet's technical platform was handled out of the Institute for Development Studies (IDS) in Sussex to allow for a quick start-up of the online services by making use of existing capacity. In 2004, GDNet moved to Cairo, residing under the legal auspices of GDN's regional network partner, the Economic and Research Forum (ERF). GDNet now has a staff of six: the Director, four Regional Coordinators and a Coordinator of Online Services. Funded by the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and the World Bank, this activity accounted for some 13 percent of total program expenses from FY02–08.

Governance and Organization

1.16 GDN is designed and operated as a "network of networks," as distinct from a central research organization. This organizational feature is manifest in its principles and structures of governance and management.

1.17 ***Principles of governance.*** The documents establishing GDN as an independent organization in 2001 specify that the network will be guided in all its activities and decisions by five principles of governance:

- Independence: GDN will not be influenced in any of its activities and decisions by political considerations.
- Openness: GDN shall operate in a transparent manner and be receptive to the views of its constituency.
- Effectiveness: GDN shall function in a manner consistent with the efficient realization of its purpose.
- Democracy: GDN shall strive for broad representation and participation.
- Plurality: GDN shall encompass a diversity of disciplines and paradigms.

1.18 ***Organizational Structure.*** GDN's structure comprises an Assembly, a Board of Directors, and a Secretariat (with a President and staff), with composition and responsibilities as follows.

- **Assembly**: the Charter establishing GDN as an international organization introduces an Assembly comprised of any State or public international organization that is a signatory to the charter agreement. The Assembly has broad oversight authority, notably to ensure that GDN fulfills its purpose and to dissolve GDN and distribute its assets. As there were only three states that had ratified the charter as of the end of 2008, the Assembly has not yet been formally constituted or met and is not discussed further in this review.
- **Board of Directors**: As the central decision-making body of the network, the Board consists of not less than 16 and not more than 20 directors, who are selected for a term of three years. It is largely a constituency-based board, currently comprised of 18 directors as described in more detail in chapter 4 (para. 4.3).The Board, which meets a minimum of twice a year, is responsible for appointing the President of GDN and directing the general operations of GDN, including setting the network's strategic direction, approving its menu of activities and related budget, and overseeing its financial management and evaluation of performance.
- **Secretariat**: As the central management and administrative hub of the organization, the Secretariat organizes and/or coordinates the implementation and monitoring of most GDN activities. It also manages the financial resources. The Secretariat is led by a President and currently has a staff of some 30 professionals and interns. Headquartered in Delhi, the Secretariat has additional offices in Cairo and Washington, D.C. In 2007, GDN experienced a leadership transition from its first to its second president; and January 2009 the second president announced his plans to resign (effective March 1, 2009) in order to assume a new position.

1.19 ***Regional Network Partners (RNPs).*** GDN works with 11 regional partners in all regions of the world, of which 8 are in developing and transition regions and 3 in developed regions (identified in Table 2). The 8 RNPs in developing and transition regions manage the annual regional research competitions. GDN has also engaged the RNPs in the identification of participants for global research projects and Annual Conferences. Recently, the RNPs have organized sessions at the Annual Conferences that showcase research on topics of importance to their regions and 8 of them currently manage regionally focused Web sites (or "regional windows") in cooperation with GDNet.

1.20 Each RNP is itself a network (or association), linking numerous researchers and institutions within its region, supporting local research, and facilitating members' contacts with policymakers. Each is also a legally separate entity that functions independently of GDN. Though the RNPs are interconnected through GDN activities and GDN is involved in some of the RNPs' activities, the regional networks remain self-regulating bodies, and their structures, governance, and scope of activities vary. For example, the Cairo-based Economic Research Forum (ERF) comprises individual researchers in the Middle East, while the East Asian Development Network (EADN) is constituted of research institutions. While some served their regional constituencies for a decade or more before becoming affiliated with GDN, others were established by GDN to give its program global scope.

Table 2. GDN Grant Support to RNPs as Percentage of Their Total Annual Revenues, FY2007

Regional Network Partner	Date founded	Total annual revenues, all sources (A)	GDN grants, including RRC (B)	(B) as % of (A)
AERC (Sub-Saharan Africa)	1988	$12,447,656	$360,000	3%
CERGE–EI (Eastern and Central Europe)	1991	$1,173,514	$354,500	30%
EADN (East Asia)	1998	$260,000	$260,000	100%
EERC (Commonwealth of Independent States)	1995	$1,469,479	$291,550	20%
ERF (Middle East and North Africa)	1993	$3,851,999	$360,530	9.5%
LACEA (Latin America and Caribbean)	1992	$229,057	$187,000	82%
SANEI (South Asia)	1998	$350,500	$350,500	100%
ODN (South Pacific)	2003	$100,000	$100,000	100%
EUDN (Western Europe)	2000	NA	0	NA
GDN–NA (North America)	2002	NA	0	NA
GDN–Japan	2000	NA	0	NA
Total		$19,922,205	$2,264,080	11.4%

Source: GDN Secretariat.

Note: It should be noted that the amounts of budget expenditures for RRCs in Figure 1 and Annex Table 6 are larger than the grant allocation figures in the present table because the former include other expenditures incurred such as travel expenses of GDN staff to RNP workshops and conferences and the allocation of GDN staff time for coordination of the RRCs and other connections with RNPs.

1.21 Consequently, the share of GDN grants in the total annual revenue of the RNPs varies considerably — ranging from as little as 3.0–9.5 percent for two RNP in existence prior to the establishment of GDN to 100 percent for three RNP established by GDN. The proportion of annual GDN grants to each RNP's total annual revenues is shown in Table 2.

1.22 ***Other Partners.*** GDN's donors and several specialized institutions comprise two additional groups of GDN partners. Donors as a group meet once a year alongside the Annual Conferences with the Board, the Secretariat, and the RNPs. The major donors and their level and areas of support are discussed in detail below in the section on GDN's financial sustainability. The other "global partners" engage with GDN in a variety of ways, such as publication of GDN-supported research, technical support of its Web site, and collaboration on research, workshops, and conferences.

2. The 2007 Independent Evaluation Process

2.1 In 2007, a small team of private consultants conducted an independent evaluation of GDN's relevance, efficacy, and efficiency.[6] Their assessment built on a 2004 independent evaluation focused largely on GDN processes — both of which were commissioned by GDN's Board.[7] In addition, the 2007 evaluation drew on several other assessments of the outcomes of specific elements of GDN's program that were internally conducted or internally commissioned. A separate independent evaluation of GDNet was commissioned by one of its main supporters, DFID, and completed in 2008 after the completion of the broader 2007 evaluation.[8] (These evaluations appear in the list of references for this review.)

2.2 For a relatively young organization, this record of evaluation is notable. Also notable is GDN's transparency and responsiveness with regard to the evaluations' findings and recommendations. All assessments are posted on the GDN Web site, along with the management responses to the two major independent evaluations.

2.3 The 2007 evaluation was conducted in an appropriately independent manner. The GDN Board commissioned and approved the terms of reference for the 2007 evaluation, which were drafted by the Secretariat. A combination of Board members and Secretariat staff selected the contractor from several responses to a competitive call for proposals. The evaluation cost about $70,000, which was covered by GDN's resources.

2.4 The program had no previous contact with the selected contractor. Nor had any of the investigators been involved in GDN activities. Conclusions in the evaluation report were arrived at independently, and, according to the contractor, there was no manipulation of findings or recommendations by GDN management or Board. Both the staff and Board gave feedback on a first draft that the evaluation team took into account at its discretion in the final drafting of its report.

2.5 While GDN was supportive of the evaluation effort and responsive to requests for information, not all information sought was readily available in usable form.[9] In addition, the evaluation team found no results chain or logical framework with measurable indicators on which to base its assessment of GDN's effectiveness.

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6. The contractor was Marc D. Shapiro, principal investigator and Managing Partner of MDS Associates (a U.S.-based firm). He was assisted by Savi Mull, Senior Research Associate, and Tina Khanna, Research Assistant. Marc D. Shapiro, Savi Mull, and Tina Khanna, "Evaluation of the Global Development Network, 2007," December 2007.

7. H. Peter Muth and Frederick H. Gerlach, "Independent Evaluation," March 16, 2004. The two main independent evaluations are referred to herein as the 2004 evaluation and the 2007 evaluation.

8. This evaluation of GDNet was being finalized at the time of the writing of this IEG review and its early emerging findings and recommendations were shared with this reviewer and are reflected in this report.

9. Interview with Marc Shapiro, October 17, 2008.

Design and Methodology

2.6 The 2007 evaluation sought to be a comprehensive assessment of GDN's relevance and its program effectiveness relative to its stated objectives. Specifically, the evaluation attempted to measure the outcomes, relevance and effectiveness of GDN activities against the program's core objective of building capacity to generate, share, and apply knowledge. It examined, in limited fashion, the cost-effectiveness and sustainability of GDN. It also examined GDN's operational effectiveness as a global network of research and policy institutions by giving attention to its interaction with its regional network partners, governance, and internal operational performance.

2.7 In undertaking this assessment, the evaluation used a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, including:

- Document reviews
- Field visits to GDN offices and workshops
- Interviews (some 90 face-to-face and by telephone)
- Multiple surveys, notably of stakeholders (board members, donor representatives, heads of regional network partners, and Secretariat staff) and end-users (regional and global research grantees, awardees, and researchers registered on the GDN Knowledgebase).[10]

2.8 A notable feature of the evaluation was its effort to grapple with the well-known challenge of judging the effectiveness of program activities intended to build research capacity. To make that judgment, the evaluation used three measures:

- It looked at research output through survey questions about the amount of research generated with GDN funds and reviews of the publishability of papers.
- It piloted an effort to assess incremental improvements in skills of grant recipients attributable to GDN and a longitudinal review of change in quality from the proposal stage to the output stage of research projects.
- It applied a statistical method to estimate comparisons between *treatment* groups (grantees) and *control* groups (a broader constituency of survey respondents) who shared similar characteristics.

2.9 Yet, the evaluation acknowledges serious limitations in the application of the latter two methods so it did not emphasize findings from them. Instead, it encouraged GDN to devote further effort to gauging the effectiveness of its research capacity building, noting that such an effort is a challenge shared widely by research capacity-building programs on a national, regional, or global level.

2.10 This IEG review, while acknowledging the broad scope and objectivity of the evaluation, notes three weaknesses. First, the evaluation had no benchmarks by which to assess GDN's progress in achieving its program's core outcome objectives. Second, because

10. Typical of experiences with online surveys, response rates to the stakeholder survey were much higher than for the end-users' survey. Indeed, as acknowledged by the evaluation, the response rate of end-users is sufficiently low to suggest that responses are biased toward those most satisfied with GDN activities.

of limitations in the data available from GDN and the methods used in the evaluation, the assessment of effectiveness is not objective. It relies primarily on self-reporting by targeted beneficiaries of such things as professional capacity built and outreach to policymakers. Third, despite the importance GDN attaches to the conduct of high-quality research and its role in informing policy, the evaluation did not engage a professional economic researcher as part of the evaluation team and attempt to examine at least a sample of reports/publications that had been produced to determine the quality and newness of the GDN-funded research and the policy relevance of the work. These are significant shortcomings which leave incomplete the assessment of GDN's effectiveness.

Findings, Recommendations, and GDN's Response

2.11 While acknowledging limitations to the available evidence, the evaluation concludes that its overall findings are "generally positive."[11] More specifically, its main findings indicate that:

- Key stakeholders perceive that the program overall is "providing mostly unique, relevant, and valuable services."
- GDN has made some progress since the previous process evaluation in certain areas. For example, GDN has been able to diversify and increase funding in recent years after having failed to meet its ambitious funding targets during FY05–07.
- Qualified evidence exists of research capacity built and knowledge created from GDN-funded activities, and limited, anecdotal, evidence of increased outreach to policymakers.
- Though it would be too ambitious for GDN to aim to influence policy, it can claim to be building a base of policy-relevant literature and capacity of future researchers who can inform better policy-making.
- Considerable work remains to be done to strengthen both program effectiveness and governance.

2.12 While concluding that overall GDN has been moving in the right directions, the evaluation offers 26 "priority" recommendations in three areas: (1) objective and reach, (2) outcomes and effectiveness of activities, and (3) governance, organizational performance, and financing. Notably, it recommends that GDN further clarify the scope and priorities of its objectives, strengthen its capacity-building and policy outreach efforts, improve its working relations with its regional partners, and bolster the functioning of its Board. (A full list of the priority recommendations is presented in Annex C.)

2.13 Overall the evaluation was well received by GDN's main stakeholders. Interviewees for this IEG review generally found it to be fair and constructive. Most said that it showed progress since the 2004 evaluation, and, at the same time, the evaluation highlighted important issues that had not been adequately resolved in the intervening years. Because of the timing of the evaluation — in the period of GDN's first leadership change since its founding — the findings were seen by the Secretariat as valuable input into the strategic thinking of its new leadership. In fact, many of the evaluation's main points proved to be

11. 2007 evaluation, p. i.

similar to ideas under consideration in the preparation of the ongoing strategic review. Consequently, GDN's management and board developed an action plan for addressing the bulk of the evaluation's recommendations and incorporated the plan into the final version of the strategic review.[12]

3. The Effectiveness of GDN

3.1 This chapter presents IEG's review of GDN taking into account the findings for the relevance of its objectives and design for meeting an internationally recognized need, the extent to which its activities have advanced its objectives, and the appropriateness and efficiency with which it has governed and managed its program. Overall, the IEG review finds that while GDN's relevance is moderately strong and its record of outputs is strong, its achievement of outcome objectives is moderate, with notable shortcomings.

Relevance

3.2 The review of GDN's relevance draws on evidence from the three phases of the organization's history: the consultative phase prior to the launch of GDN; the start up of GDN as an independent organization; and the more recent phase of GDN following its relocation to New Delhi. Thus IEG's review covers the maturation of GDN over almost 10 years.

3.3 ***GDN's goal and objectives.*** The relevance of GDN's overarching goal was high at the outset of the program and remains high today. Its focus on research generated from within developing and transition countries is widely viewed as responsive to a need for such research to inform national policies and strengthen the voice of these countries in global policy-making. Historically, most development research has come from outside developing countries. Moreover, funding for developing country research is in short supply: little comes from governments or other domestic sources and international research support is most often for inputs into international policies and practices.

3.4 Prior to the launch of GDN, the World Bank held a series of consultations and conducted a survey of some 512 research institutions worldwide.[13] Both the consultations and survey revealed strong support for a global network focused on development research from developing and transition countries and its translation into policy. More specifically, the views noted an increasing gap between the demand for policy-relevant research in developing countries and the supply of funds for this purpose. These views also emphasized that effective support for building a base of high-quality research would go beyond adequate funding. Such support would also require mechanisms for mentoring, training, systematic use of networks of researchers across countries and regions, and enhanced access to various kinds of online databases and other resources.[14]

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12. The major action items identified by GDN's management in its formal response to the 2007 evaluation are presented along with the list of recommendations in Annex C.

13. Erik Johnson and Diane Stone, "The Genesis of the GDN," undated manuscript.

14. Survey cited in Ramona Angelescu and Lyn Squire, "Capacity Building and Policy Impact: The Experience of the Global Development Network," paper presented at World Bank and CEU Conference, Budapest, June

3.5 The independent evaluations of GDN in 2004 and 2007 found that stakeholders continued to view GDN's objective as highly relevant. As reported in 2004: "GDN's programs and activities meet a clear demand of a global market for development-related knowledge…." The 2007 evaluation confirmed that all of GDN's constituencies saw continuing value in a global network of development researchers and institutions. Overall, the evaluation concluded that GDN is "providing a highly valuable service of funding research by individuals in developing and transition countries" both regionally and cross-regionally.

3.6 Yet, this IEG review has been unable to find ***a clear and unambiguous definition of the "problem" for which GDN was established.*** GDN has a vision of good, evidence-based policy-making having an impact on the development of countries in all regions. It is also built on the rationale that there is need for more and better research from within developing and transition countries to inform national and international development policies. But its documentation is not clear about the extent to which the inadequacies it seeks to address relate to: (1) the volume of high-quality, policy-relevant research being generated, (2) the technical quality of the current research output, or (3) the policy relevance and outreach of that research. While all of these shortcomings are said to exist, GDN does not define, except at a high level of generality, the nature of the problem its program targets and where its specific comparative advantage as a global network lies is addressing the problem(s).

3.7 As a result, ***the translation of GDN's overarching objective into its three program objectives has been a source of continuing debate among stakeholders and remains in need of clarification.*** Both the 2004 and 2007 evaluations found tension regarding GDN's objectives, even though the more recent evaluation noted "somewhat greater agreement and lower tensions"[15] among shareholders on the objectives. Specifically, although there is widespread agreement on capacity building as an objective, if not the primary program objective, GDN has lacked consensus among key stakeholders on three points:

- ***The primacy of the capacity aim, especially in relation to the aim of generating high-quality research.*** For some, the two are so intricately related as not to be a problem; for others, there is something of a trade-off between capacity building and quality research output, which has not been clearly resolved in GDN's statements of objective and related program planning.

- ***The extent to which GDN's research and support for research capacity building should have a multidisciplinary focus (rather than focusing predominantly on economics).*** While disagreements on this issue — both among board members and donors — appear to have subsided since the conclusion of the 2007 evaluation,[16] interviews for this IEG review suggest that the current Board-approved stance (of

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2005; and in Johnson and Stone.

15. 2007 evaluation, p. ii.

16. While the 2007 evaluation found "somewhat greater agreement and lower tensions regarding GDN's objectives," it noted that the "role of multidisciplinarity remains an area of disagreement, although no longer quite the source of tension as previously" (p. ii).

retaining economics as GDN's "default discipline," while giving importance to the selection of interdisciplinary research themes) is very recent and not sufficiently spelled out in the view of all who continue to worry about GDN spreading itself too thin.

- ***How much emphasis to give to strengthening the policy outreach of researchers and research institutions.*** This remains the most unsettled issue. In the view of some, GDN should focus on building capacity and helping to generate high-quality research, which will find its way into policy because of existing high demand; in the view of others, GDN needs to give more direct support to policy outreach activities.

3.8 ***Design.*** Conceptually, GDN's four design features are highly relevant to the pursuit of the organization's overarching goal and program objectives, but these reveal substantial weaknesses when put into practice. The four design features, consistent with GDN's objectives, are the following:

- ***GDN activities are wholly focused on developing and transition country research.*** While many research programs that seek to expand the quantity and quality of development research, GDN's program concentrates on enhancing the generation, sharing, and application of development research work from within the developing world.

- ***The program is global in scope, involving researchers and partner institutions from all regions of the world.*** In the view of many, GDN's global scope is its primary value. Some regional research networks existed at the time that GDN was founded and others were established subsequently (in part with the help of GDN). What GDN offers, uniquely, is a mechanism for connecting these networks and other researchers and fostering an exchange of knowledge and experience among the research communities. It also offers a global platform for increasing the exchange of ideas among developing country researchers and between them and others as well as raising the worldwide visibility of developing country research.

- ***It is structured as a network of networks (as distinct from a global think tank).*** This feature recognizes that while there are large benefits to sharing knowledge and experience across regions, research capacity building and policy outreach support needs to be tailored to regional and country differences. While the alternative of GDN as a centralized global research institution that organizes and carries out its own research that could generate comparative and cross-country development research, it would not offer the same potential for building sustainable, policy-relevant research capabilities and voice throughout the developing world.

- ***It facilitates a menu of activities as a way to achieve its three program objectives.*** GDN designed its set of activities on the grounds that no one action would be adequate to meet its core program objectives. Both the 2004 and 2007 independent evaluations of GDN and interviews for this review share this view and see all the activities as relevant to GDN's purpose.

3.9 In practice, however, GDN's design reveals three substantial weaknesses. The first weakness is ***the absence of a theory of change (or conceptual road map) and rigorous strategies for achieving each of its three program outcome objectives.*** This weakness is reflected in the apparent absence of a results framework linking inputs (resources) and outputs (activities) to intended outcomes or even intermediate outcomes (such as better research, enhanced capacity, and improved policy outreach). The 2007 evaluation notes that the absence of such a framework makes evaluation of GDN effectiveness difficult. More importantly, it makes it hard for GDN to make the most effective use of its resources, identify where donor support is most needed, and judge if it is being successful in advancing its outcomes objectives.

3.10 To date, GDN has put its time and attention into conducting a portfolio of activities on the grounds that these activities will, in varying ways, advance its three program objectives of generating high-quality, policy-relevant research, building enhanced research capacity, and linking that research to policy-making. But it lacks a strategy for achieving each of those program objectives in ways that builds on the state of knowledge about how to achieve these aims and that systematically integrates its activities into such strategies. For example, GDN sees its RRCs, GRPs, and GDNet activities as central to achieving its capacity-building and policy outreach objectives, but it does not systematically connect these activities to well-defined approaches for achieving the two objectives.

3.11 The second weakness is the ***imprecise configuration of its network structure***. It is instructive that after almost 10 years of operation, the 2007 evaluation highlights as unresolved the issue of whether GDN is "a network of networks" or a central organization that provides grants to network grantees. Although GDN is built on the notion of a partnership among regional networks in the design and implementation of activities, the reality is that the operational roles and responsibilities of GDN's Secretariat and the RNPs are not adequately delineated.

3.12 On the one hand, GDN has adopted a largely decentralized approach to the support of regional research and research capacity building, through its RNPs. This approach makes sense given the differences among regions in their research practices and capacities. While GDN requires that the regional partners follow standards of transparency and a competitive process in the awarding of grants, each RNP has latitude in selecting thematic emphases and setting procedures and guidelines for the use of the GDN-provided funds. However, the division of responsibility between the RNPs and Secretariat for quality control and monitoring and evaluation of the regionally based activities is not clear. This weakness is reflected in the shortage of information available as input into the 2007 evaluation's assessment of the results of the RRCs. It is also reflected in the finding discussed below regarding regional variation in the adequacy of the mentoring and other capacity-building support provided to researchers as part of the RNPs' management of their allocation of GDN resources.[17]

17. For example, rather than making research grants to individuals as most of the RNPs do, LACEA, which is an association of individuals, uses its allocation of GDN funds to support a range of services considered beneficial to the research work of their individual members, such as an annual conference, topic-specific smaller meetings of researchers, and publication of a journal aimed at directing research to policymakers. As

3.13 On the other hand, GDN takes a centralized approach to other of its other major activities, notably the GRPs and Annual Conferences. And the RNPs are of the view that their roles and responsibilities are not sufficient in the design and implementation of these activities to capture the interests and ongoing work of their regions. Despite this, GDN's Board has recently "strongly emphasized that GDN is much more than a network of networks" and agreed that GDN should explore the possibility of undertaking some in-house research, "providing other activities are not hampered."[18] Where this exploration will lead and how it might involve the RNPs remains an open question.

3.14 The third and final design weakness is the ***underdevelopment of GDN's networking services.*** GDN is based on the assumption that global efficiencies can be achieved through cross-regional knowledge-sharing and cross-regional capacity building, as well as shared efforts in setting research standards and mobilizing resources. Despite this, the services that GDN's Secretariat has provided to realize these efficiencies have not been well defined nor, apparently, resourced. Three points illustrate this problem. The first point relates to the Secretariat's role in relation to the varied institutional capacity of individual RNPs. Both SANEI and ODI have lagged other RNPs in their performance in managing RRCs. Yet, this has not been reflected in assistance provided to them by the Secretariat to build their institutional capacities; nor is the level of performance reflected in annual research grant allocations made by the Secretariat to the RNPs. The wide variation in the size and capacity of the RNPs and extent of GDN engagement with them raises questions of whether the organization's strategy of globalization is paying off in terms of coverage and quality, and of whether its resources are spread too thin. Second, the Secretariat's role in helping its RNPs mobilize resources appears to have been modest to date (leaving three RNP still 100 percent dependent on GDN funding) though this was one rationale for the formation of GDN. Third, the Secretariat's role in ensuring adequate objectives-based M&E of core GDN activities is not clear — in particular, its role in ensuring that the necessary data is provided for assessing the outcomes (as distinct from the outputs) of the RRCs and GRPs.

3.15 GDN's Strategic Review — prepared in 2007 under the leadership of its then new president and in light of the external evaluation — addresses both the need for a greater clarity of objectives and the strengthening of relations with RNPs. But the resignation of the previous president in March 2009 (after less than two years in that position) and his replacement in mid-August 2009 leaves open the question of how far and how fast any changes will be made.

Efficacy

3.16 IEG's review of GDN's progress in achieving its objectives draws on the several internal and external evaluations of GDN undertaken over the period FY02–08 and interviews conducted in mid-FY09. Overall, the evidence on GDN's efficacy from these sources is thin. It is based largely on self-reporting by grantees and other stakeholders (notably survey data and interviews) and focuses more on outputs than outcomes. The

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another example, CERGE–EI provides varied kinds and intensity of mentoring and feedback to researchers based on their levels of experience.

18. GDN documentation, January 2008.

limitations of the evidence reflect, in part, the inherent difficulty of determining the kinds of outcomes which GDN seeks, notably enhanced research capacity and policy influence. In addition, the limitations reflect GDN weaknesses in setting and tracking clear and monitorable outcome objectives; and shortcomings in the methodology of the recent evaluation, which chose not to use established approaches (such as tracer studies and quality reviews) to assess GDN's capacity building and other aims.

3.17 Based on the available evidence, this IEG review finds that GDN has a strong output record in each of its five areas of activity. Evaluations also show some "moderate evidence" of achievements in advancing two of its three core objectives — enhanced research capacity and increased output of high-quality research (though no evidence of the policy relevance of this work); and very limited evidence of success in advancing its third objective of strengthening the link between research and policy-making. But the absence of specific GDN

Table 3. Level of Activity

Activity	Baseline (fiscal year)	Progress (as of fiscal year)	Target values (FY09)
Research			
Cumulative number of funded and mentored researchers	1300 (FY05)	1960 (FY08)	2200
Share of publishable outputs	64% (FY02)	87% (FY07)	90%
Share of researchers producing policy briefs	60% (FY05)	60% (FY07)	75%
Global Research Projects			
Total number of projects	4 (FY05)	6 (FY08)	7
Awards and Medals			
Number of award and medal submissions	351 (FY02)	626 (FY08)	650
Annual Conference			
Number of conference participants	400 (FY02)	500 (FY08)	600
Number of workshops	4 (FY02)	9 (FY08)	10
GDNet			
Web site traffic	30,000 (March 2004)	95,398 (June–November 2007)	105,000 (June–November 2008)
Research documents	7,000 (March 2004)	13,677 (November 2007)	15,050 (November 2008)
Researcher profiles	3,000 (March 2004)	6,925 (November 2007)	7,620 (November 2007)

Source: DGF Progress Report, FY09

Note: Some baseline and progress indicators were collected in course of independent evaluations only. Going forward, the progress reports will need also to include total number of IRPs and number of training programs.

criteria and outcome targets renders these findings less robust than desirable. The remainder of this section elaborates on these findings by first reporting on GDN's achievements activity-by-activity and second examining the combined effect of the activities on each of GDN's three core objectives.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF GDN'S FIVE MAIN ACTIVITIES

3.18 GDN increased outputs in all five areas of activity since becoming an independent organization in FY02, as shown in Table 3.

3.19 Researchers — the intended primary, direct beneficiaries of GDN's efforts — have expressed high to very high ratings of overall satisfaction with these activities, as shown in Table 4. Yet, the evidence on the outcomes of each of these activities measured against GDN's three program objectives is more modest.

Table 4. Researchers' Overall Satisfaction with GDN Activities (n = 1,224)

Overall Satisfaction Rating	Percent
Very low	1
Low	7
Medium	38
High	39
Very high	14
Total	100

3.20 ***RRCs.*** From inception through FY08, GDN has funded over 800 research grants through RRCs. Overall, the efficacy of this activity varies across regions and in terms of its contribution to each of GDN's program objectives. The large majority of the GDN-funded research has led to completed projects. Thus, the support has clearly added to the base of knowledge on development emanating from developing and transition countries, though the 2007 evaluation disputes the extent to which GDN can claim that this is new knowledge. Research grantees report "moderate direct effects" in enhancing research capacity at the individual level. In contrast, the 2007 evaluation found little corroborating evidence of capacity built from RRC processes as measured by quality improvements from proposals to research papers. It also found variation in stakeholder perceptions of the RRCs' capacity-building impact across regions, seemingly correlated with the amount of feedback and mentoring provided to grantees in different regions.[19]

3.21 RRCs are also intended to improve the capacity of researchers to inform policy, but this has been a limited feature of most of the RRCs to date. Interviews for this IEG review reflect the prevailing support among shareholders for the RRCs, but indicate concern about the variation in effectiveness across regions. A main problem is the absence of information about the quality of the research and the extent it informs policy.

3.22 ***GRPs.*** So far, GDN has completed four GRPs, and, at the end of 2008, had four other GRPs ongoing.[20] The efficacy of the GRPs varies across projects as well as across GDN program objectives. As described in Annex B, the four completed projects have varied in

19. 2007 evaluation, p. 12.

20. This is exclusive of the four Strategic Research Partnership projects that were in the early stages of start-up at the end of 2008.

size, time to completion, and level of output. So far, three of the completed projects have led to substantial output and dissemination of research in the form of papers and edited volumes. While the 2007 evaluation finds that GRP papers show greater originality, clarity, and effective methodology than RRC papers, it concludes that they are equally limited in their capacity-building effect. Stakeholders closest to the work of the GRPs are generally more positive than others about the projects' effectiveness in building research capacity. Even so, they and other stakeholders see need for improvements in the design and implementation of projects in order to provide more technical input and training early in the project process, and suggest that GDN reduce the average size of the projects to make them more manageable. Most IEG interviewees were more critical of the GRPs, noting that they are, for the most part, neither high-quality research nor good capacity building. As one interviewee stated, although they are sold as capacity building, they provide for "capacity building in a hurry, which is not the right way."

3.23 There is some perception that the effectiveness of these projects has been improving over time. For example, the recent project on health is seen by GDN leadership to embody what GDN has learned about how to make GRPs effective — notably a strong policy focus, a mix of more and less experienced researchers, and the active engagement of the RNPs. But the project is ongoing so there is as yet no indication of its actual success in informing policy. Overall, the experience so far leaves open the question of whether GRPs can give equal emphasis to the objective of capacity building, along with the generation of high-quality research and policy outreach. The GRP experience demonstrates GDN's weakness in developing concise strategies for meeting the three program objectives and clearly aligning activities to those strategies.

3.24 ***Annual Conferences.*** As of 2008, a total of over 4,000 participants from some 100 countries had attended the eight Annual Conferences convened since 1999. About 70 percent of participants were from developing and transition countries. All categories of GDN stakeholders view the conferences as at least moderately useful in bringing researchers together across regions and giving them the opportunity to increase their own visibility. More specifically, survey respondents who have attended at least one conference see their value, in descending order, in providing opportunities for making presentations, enhancing research skills and knowledge, providing feedback on research, and increasing the policy relevance of research. Disagreement is stronger on the quality of the conference papers and proceedings and the extent to which they offer intellectual value.[21] Some think the capacity building (as well as cost-efficiency) of the Annual Conferences might be increased by focusing less on the showcasing of "big names" from the global research community and more on organizing sessions to provide feedback on the work of GDN-funded researchers. But others worry that a greater focus on capacity building would not attract high-quality researchers to the meetings. "The conflict demonstrates the challenging trade-offs in effect implicit in GDN trying to pursue multiple objectives for the conference."[22] Interviewees for this IEG review share the view that the Annual Conferences have been more useful in providing a networking

21. The 2007 evaluation makes a comparison with another professional conference that took many years to become consistently strong in quality

22. 2007 evaluation, p. 22.

function than feedback or policy relevance, and share the view that the ambiguity in the purpose and design of the conferences impede their effectiveness.

3.25 ***GDAMCs.*** Nearly 4,300 individuals from over 100 countries have participated in this competition to date. In 2007, the competition attracted more than 600 applicants. There is limited evidence on the efficacy of this activity. GDN has provided quantitative data on the number of submissions for each year's set number of awards and medals. It also emphasizes that the awards are the main way that GDN advances a multidisciplinary orientation to development research and seeks to advance both woman and younger researchers. But this IEG review found no information on the outcomes of those awards in terms of output or policy outreach from research awards, nor hard evidence on enhanced career development of awardees.

3.26 ***GDNet.*** This Internet activity is one of the two GDN main activities aimed primarily at increasing knowledge sharing. Notably, it now provides online access to some 14,000 research papers from developing and transition countries. It also provides a package of online services for developing country researchers and research institutions and seeks to assist them in better communicating their research to academics and policymakers. Thus, it aims, like the other activities, to advance all three of GDN's core objectives. All groups of stakeholders surveyed in the 2007 evaluation rated the activity as moderately to very valuable, while recommending that it could be made more user-friendly. Some two-thirds of survey respondents who are GDNet-registered researchers found the activity of high value for the package of services it offers (such as its information on funding opportunities and ongoing research). Even so, they also rated it behind other search engines or their own institutions' Internet services for access to journals and other research output. Most researchers also found GDNet more valuable in increasing their knowledge of their own subject area than in enhancing outreach and building contacts with other researchers or policymakers. Still, the 2007 evaluation found that stakeholders, overall, lack familiarity with GDNet. The evaluation therefore concluded that GDNet needs to increase its visibility to reach its full potential. It also concluded that if GDNet wants to continue to "differentiate itself as adding value through aggregating information on development from the southern perspective in ways not available otherwise, it has a difficult task ahead to do so."[23] In addition, it noted that as a tool to increase the policy communication and influence of developing country researchers, GDNet has a largely unrealized potential.

3.27 The findings of the DFID-commissioned evaluation of GDNet are consistent with those of the 2007 evaluation, but provide a more comprehensive assessment that makes three main points:

- GDNet is providing a well-used and valued service that provides research funding information, access to online journals and data, communication among peers, and access to unpublished research. But it is much less highly valued as a unique service for the reasons for which it was primarily designed — that is, to support knowledge generation through access to information and knowledge resources. While it devotes much of its time to this function and exercises good quality control over its

23. 2007 evaluation, p. 24.

knowledge base of developing country papers and articles, it needs to develop a strategy to provide more distinctive value added.

- While it aims to be an instrument to advance GDN's objective of informing policy, little of what it currently does takes it outside the research domain. As an intermediary, the policy-relevance of its online information is limited by the policy relevance of the research that comprises its knowledge base. To fulfill its policy purpose, it needs to move from a passive to an active approach based on a clear theory of change and strategy on how research can better inform policy.

- An important step in improving its usability would be greater audience segmentation of its information and services, and a strong focus on its recent innovation of regional windows developed in coordination with GDN's RNPs.[24]

3.28 IEG interviewees share the view that GDNet is a key tool for advancing GDN's core objectives, but that it has not yet fully developed its unique mission. This development would seem to require closer integration of GDNet and other GDN activities and more investment in GDNet's operation. It is a positive sign, therefore, that in its management response to the external evaluation, GDNet has launched a redesign of its Web site, signaled its intention to continue expanding the online portfolio of services, and most importantly committed to the development of a strategic plan.[25]

3.29 ***Building on the activities' record.*** GDN has developed a set of five core activities each of which is meant to advance all three of GDN's core objectives though to varying degrees. Overall, it is on track in delivering annual outputs of these five main activities. Notably, GDN is helping fill a widely perceived need for support of more and better developing country research, facilitating increased cross-country analysis, and promoting increased communication among and visibility of developing and transition country researchers. This record led GDN's own Strategic Review to conclude that, "GDN is now implementing comfortably its five core programs and can therefore consider expanding its activities." In particular, as reported in Box 1, GDN is now planning to simultaneously develop a new portfolio of training programs linked to basic research skills, strengthen its efforts to strengthen the link between research and policy, and support the strengthening of research institutions.[26] While it is too soon to evaluate any of these plans, it is apparent that the plans represent a substantial increase in the level and scope of GDN activity. Thus, a key question for GDN going forward is, how to ensure that the expanded portfolio reinforces rather than distracts from its original core activities in contributing to the achievement of GDN's core objectives.

OVERALL ACHIEVEMENT OF CORE OBJECTIVES

3.30 In comparison to GDN's success in implementing a menu of activities, its record of advancing its three program objectives is far less robust. IEG's review reveals an overall record of moderate progress on generating new policy-relevant research and enhanced

24. Forthcoming.

25. GDN Progress Report, July–December 2008.

26. GDN Strategic Review, p. 23.

Box 1. GDN's Plans for Expanding Its Activities

Since 2007, GDN has begun to develop initiatives for expanding beyond its five core activities in a several ways. As reported by GDN, its main "emerging activities" are:

- *Regional training program:* Based on a survey conducted jointly by GDN and its RNPs that revealed constituency interest in research skills training, GDN supported training pilots carried out by three RNPs (CERGE–EI, EERC, and LACEA). Evaluation of the pilots by an external consultant concluded that GDN was well positioned to meet a growing demand for training by offering training activities that would complement other such activities in its partner regions. GDN is therefore planning to launch a scaled-up Regional Training Initiative for a period of two years starting in 2009 subject to a decision of its Board in February 2009.
- *Increased policy outreach.* Building on consultations around its Bridging Research and Policy GRP, its Strategic Review, and its Management Response to the 2007l evaluation, GDN has launched a project in partnership with two RNPs (SANEI and AERC), funded by the Gates Foundation, to promote evidence-based policies in agriculture and trade. In addition, following a Board endorsement in July 2008 of a "concerted effort" to mainstream policy in all GDN activities, the Board has enlisted three former government officials to advise it on a strategy for enhancing the policy-relevance of GDN's work.
- *Support to research institutions:* Two donor-initiated projects move GDN from its current focus on supporting individual researchers to supporting the strengthening of research institutions. With support from DFID, GDN launched a project in December 2008 aimed at strengthening the analytic underpinnings of national policy debates on public expenditure management and impact on public service delivery. The project, begun with five initial partner institutions, seeks to engage a peer group of up to 20 institutions. GDN will partner with the AERC in a second project, supported by UNDP, to enhance knowledge management capacity in African public policy institutions and networks with a particular focus on the poverty and hunger MDGs.
- *International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie).* This multidonor funded initiative aims to provide and summarize evidence on what works and why in programs intended to improve peoples' lives. GDN and 3ie have formed a partnership for a period of years. 3ie will operate as a grant program within GDN that finances impact studies and other evaluations in developing countries. GDN will serve as its temporary host institution, providing office space, as well IT and other administrative support, for some 3–5 years as 3ie matures and becomes a wholly independent operation.

Source: GDN documentation and interviews.

research capacity, and little progress on informing policy. It also sees a lack of strategic clarity in the pursuit of each of the program objectives as a major reason for the moderate progress to date in advancing GDN's aims.

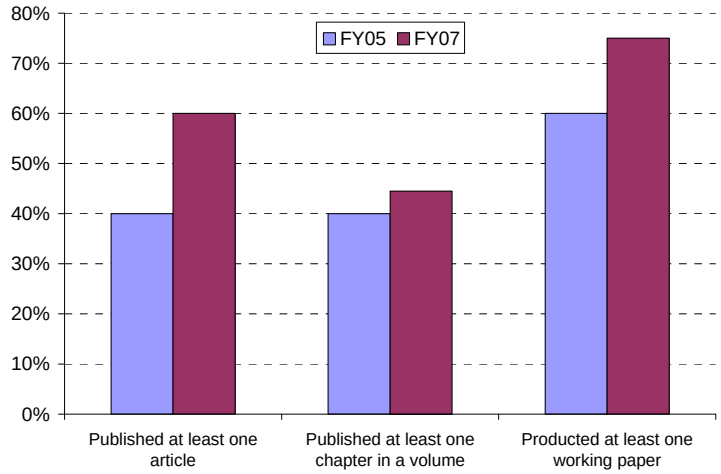
3.31 ***The generation of high-quality, policy-relevant research.*** GDN's strongest record is in supporting increased amounts of development research from within developing and transition countries. GDN-funded research has also led to an increase in the dissemination of that work through papers, journal articles, and books. For example, GDN's publication series, designed to give voice to researchers from developing and transition countries, has released 13 books, one of the earliest being an edited volume from GDN's first GRP on "explaining growth." In partnership with the series' publisher, GDN is able to makes these works available for half price to individuals registered on its Knowledge Base and copies of

all publications under the series will soon be available for free and electronically to registered users of GDN's Web site. In addition, GDN has expanded access to the work of the researchers it supports through its Web site and through publications. Each of these processes has quality-control mechanisms in place. But there is not sufficient cumulative evidence to be able to rate the quality or the policy relevance of the research output or to know if the GDN-sponsored research has improved in quality and policy relevance over time.[27]

3.32 ***Research capacity building.*** Combined findings on the effectiveness of GDN's five activities indicate that, overall, GDN has been moderately effective in building research capacity at the individual level. In addition, survey data from 2005 and 2007 suggest a modest increase in GDN's contribution to research capacity building over time. For example, grantees report stronger publication records emanating from their grants and prizes in 2007 as compared to 2005, as shown in Figures 2 and 3.

3.33 This data on publications self-reported by grantees is corroborated by an assessment conducted by independent referees of a selected set of proposals and papers funded by GDN. This assessment shows that as of 2007 only a minority of completed studies are deemed "not publishable" by the experts.[28] In addition, GDN progress reports show that the "share of publishable outputs from GDN-funded research rose from 64 percent in FY02 to 87 percent in FY07. [29]

Figure 2. Research Output (as percentage of the grantee survey respondents)



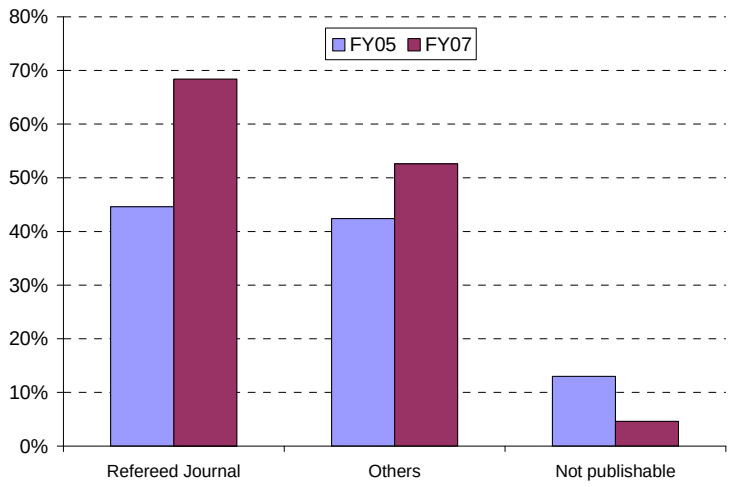
Source: GDN, "Management Response and Actions," January 2008.

27. Some interviewees for this review also expressed concern that there is not evidence on the extent to which the research would have been produced without GDN support, but this counterfactual assessment is hard for any evaluation to make.

28. The GDN-funded proposals and papers reviewed were from one of GDN's RNPs, CERGE-EI, and the recently completed GRP — The Impact of Rich Countries' Policies on Poverty.

29. GDN's management response to the 2007 evaluation notes, as a caveat, that a longer period has passed since GDN's inception for publications to materialize, which may explain in part the considerably higher values reported in the 2007 survey.

Figure 3. Assessment of Publishability (as percentage of selected studies assessed by independent referees)



Source: GDN, "Management Response and Actions," January 2008.

3.34 Other survey findings indicate that GDN's target beneficiaries (i.e., the RRC and GRP grantees and GDAMC winners) on average give the program credit for contributing, to a moderate degree, to their research capacity and career advancement. Findings also indicate an increase over time in beneficiary ratings in some areas, as shown by the shading in Table 5. Yet, the increases occur in only slightly more than half of the areas of impact and, for the most part, average values are in a middle range of 3 on a 5-point scale (1 being "very low" and 5 being "very high").

3.35 Moreover, the 2007 evaluation found no corroborating evidence of positive capacity-building effects from RRCs or GRPs using other evaluative measures such as identifiable improvements in products from successive stages of proposal to final report. It also noted that the mentoring process during the course of the RRCs and GRPs — seen by GDN as a major feature of its capacity-building effort — had declined since 2005 and was of widely varying effectiveness across regions. This overall finding is consistent with the dominant thrust of responses about GDN's capacity-building effectiveness in interviews for this IEG review. Notably, while all interviewees cited capacity building as a key program objective, if

Table 5. Beneficiaries' Ratings of GDN Contributions to Various Dimensions of Capacity Building

Group	Knowledge of subject	Research contacts	Career advancement	Visibility	Contact with policymakers
RRC and GRP grantees	**3.8**	**4.0**	**3.3**	**3.3**	2.8
GDAM winners	**3.4**	3.7	3.4	3.2	2.9
GDNet registrees	**3.7**	**3.6**	**3.5**	**3.5**	–

Source: GDN Management Response, January 2008, p. 4.

Note: Bold numbers are higher values than in the 2005 pilot internal capacity building evaluation. Ratings: 1 = very low; 5 = very high.

not the primary objective of GDN, several stated that the capacity-building effort is not systematically designed.

3.36 As indicated, GDN is now planning to expand its capacity-building effort beyond research support for individual researchers by initiating a research training program and helping to strengthen research institutions (Box 1). In the view of this IEG review, if GDN is going to move in one or both of these expanded directions, it ought to do so not as a stand-alone measure, but as part of the development of a comprehensive capacity-building strategy.

3.37 One of the apparent reasons for GDN's moderate effectiveness in research capacity building is the absence of an overarching capacity-building strategy to which the various GDN activities are linked. Also, GDN is not sufficiently clear about the prioritization of the knowledge generation and capacity-building goals of its major research-support activities and, therefore, the allocation of money and staff time to promote capacity building. As one interviewee said, "the aim is to get the best research possible from individuals in developing and transition countries and to enhance further existing capacity in a pragmatic and flexible way, so there is really no trade-off between generating high quality research and building capacity." But GDN has not developed a systematic strategy for doing this. It claims that its research projects are meant to bring in and mentor younger talent. But its record suggests that it has not yet resolved how to ensure that capacity building takes place as needed within the different regions and separately-led GRPs. It has not decided how far to go beyond its aim of building capacity for technically sound analysis to capacity for influencing policy-making, as discussed below. Nor does GDN have sufficient monitoring and evaluation processes (such as periodic tracer studies) to know how well its capacity-building efforts work.

3.38 There is by now a large body of literature that shows that building research capacity is a long-term process that rarely has significant sustainable effects from one-off activities. Instead, training activities, in particular, have well-known conditions for success.[30] GDN needs to draw on that accumulated knowledge and to commission an expert assessment of its comparative advantage in capacity building with the aim of assisting it in designing a sharper, more strategically designed effort.

3.39 ***Informing policy.*** The 2007 evaluation concluded that GDN's aim of "influencing policy" was unrealistic for a program of its kind. Rather, it found that it can claim to be building a cadre of professionals capable of informing the policy process in support of better policy-making. Yet, it also reported that stakeholders rated GDN's contribution to "facilitating contacts with policy-makers" lower on average than its other capacity-building effects and that the average rating had declined since 2005 (as shown in Table 5). Thus GDN's efforts to strengthen the policy relevance of research training and output has been weak, reflecting a more academic than policy focused orientation. A similar conclusion emerged from the separate GDNet evaluation, as noted above. According to the GDNet evaluation, while GDNet can be a key means for enhancing the policy outreach of GDN-supported research, it needs to narrow the existing gap between its current outputs and this

30. See, for example, two IEG evaluations on World Bank capacity building and training activities: "Capacity Building in Africa: An OED Evaluation of World Bank Support," April 2005 and "Using Training to Build Capacity for Development: An Evaluation of Project-based and WBI Training," July 2008.

purpose. And, for that, GDNet needs to add a clear outreach function linked to an overall GDN strategy for better linking research to policy-making.[31]

3.40 GDN has recognized the need for a well-defined approach to informing policy. This recognition was the reason for its "Bridging Research and Policy" project (described in Annex B). But the project went for several years without showing significant results.[32] A major issue for GDN is that informing policy is a difficult function for a global organization. So, in the view of the several independent evaluations and interviews for this review, GDN should probably concentrate on empowering and pressing RNPs and researchers to be more proactive rather than developing a centralized policy-informing function. But, as the GDNet evaluation emphasizes, this function needs to be designed in the context of a clear theory of change and strategy for achieving change. The recent decision by the Board that policy outreach should be mainstreamed in all GDN activities is a step forward. But the endorsement needs to be followed up by the development of a clear approach not just a lot more activity.

3.41 Thus, overall, this IEG review finds that GDN's effectiveness in achieving its intended outcome objectives is hampered by the absence of: (1) clear prioritization among the multiple objectives in each of its core and expanded activities; (2) a well-defined strategy for advancing each of its core objectives which interconnects and shapes its activities and guides the allocation of resources; and (3) adequate outcome-based M&E processes for assessing the extent to which activities are advancing each of GDN's core program objectives. Moving on all of these measures would seem essential to ensuring effective maintenance much less expansion of the program.

Efficiency

3.42 It is not possible to make an overall assessment of GDN's efficiency with the evidence on hand at the time of this review.[33] The 2007 evaluation is generally positive regarding GDN's handling of revenue fluctuations, administrative costs, and financial management. Also, GDN has made progress in increasing and diversifying the sources of its revenue, which is discussed in a subsequent section.

3.43 ***Amounts and uses of funds.*** GDN's budget has reflected considerable volatility in the availability of annual revenues. Total budget expenses reached $10.4 million in FY03. GDN then experienced three years of financial declines, reaching a low of $6.6 million in

31. A small pilot collaboration between GDNet and the Middle East RNP focused on strengthening policy outreach did not succeed, but did identify some important lessons for developing GDNet's role in the policy outreach area.

32. In the view of staff at the Overseas Development Institute in London, who were enlisted to help set up the BRP, the project framework became far too academic to achieve its aim.

33. The 2007 evaluation examined several aspects of GDN efficiency, but experienced limitations in evaluating cost-efficiencies because GDN "lacks benchmarks for comparisons, and activities involve different outputs and outcomes, some not readily quantified nor easily comparable" (p. iii). The difficulties also reflect the absence of GDN outcome metrics (even proxy or intermediate metrics) for judging its effectiveness. This absence of metrics is as a major challenge to be overcome before the next independent evaluation.

FY06 before moving upward again to $9.1 million in FY08.[34] Annex E provides detailed information on revenues and expenses over the years from inception through FY08.

3.44 GDN dealt with its funding situation by scaling activities up or down based on the actual levels of funding available year by year, and thus was "**able to fund its primary activities to a level deemed satisfactory to key stakeholders** even if it is not near meeting the high absorptive capacity of its many potential beneficiaries for its conceivable activities."[35] According to the 2007 evaluation, this program financing is particularly noteworthy given that the increase in GDN budget revenues in recent years has come in the form of earmarked funds that constrained GDN's ability to shift resources among activities.

3.45 ***Cost-effectiveness of individual activities.*** The 2007 evaluation tried to conduct cost-effectiveness analysis for GDN's five major activities, primarily by measuring the average unit cost per output across each activity. The evaluation noted, however, that comparative criteria for judging the cost-effectiveness of the GDN activities were absent and it suggested that the next evaluation should be tasked with addressing this matter more fully. [36]

3.46 Using the per unit cost approach, the 2007 evaluation concluded that RRCs generally are more cost-effective mechanisms in the strictest sense of the term (some $19,000 per team and $12,000 per team member on average) than GRPs (averaging between $54,000 and $135,000 per grant), though theoretically GRPs can lead to greater knowledge added in a concentrated subject area or lead to other follow-on activities besides publications. The evidence suggests that there may be greater efficiency gains to smaller GRPs.

3.47 Different measures for the Annual Conference lead to sharply differing conclusions about the activity's cost-efficiency. For instance, the per-paper cost is high given the lack of the papers' capacity-building effects, though participation costs are relatively reasonable (if one excludes the estimated participation costs of the conference side business meetings and workshops). As for GDNet, the issue is less one of cost-efficiency than awareness, user friendliness, and service to researchers.

3.48 Finally, the GDAMC, which are funded through an individual and decreasing earmarked grant that is not fungible across activities, were found not to be cost-effective relative to other activities (about $18,000 per medal, $62,000 per award, and $70,000 per innovative development projects).

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34. It should be noted that these levels include expenses of $1.0 million, $1.2 million, and $0.3 million for FY03 to FY05, respectively, for a World Bank-supported activity for which GDN managed the disbursement of funds although not the program. It should also be noted that projected budget revenue for FY09 is over $16 million, or almost double that of FY08 (the last year covered by this review). This large jump in budget is due primarily to resources for new programs one of which is managed by GDN and the other, 3ie, which GDN hosts.

35. 2007 evaluation, p. vii.

36. For example, it noted that the next evaluation will have to judge the cost-efficiency of the otherwise cost inefficient ongoing projects — the Bridging Research and Policy and Health GRPs — based on activities and direct and indirect outputs from them.

3.49 GDN has made changes in the allocation of resources across its five core activities, which are responsive to previous criticisms, especially of the high cost of its Annual Conference in early years. But the changes in allocations are not entirely consistent with the relative valuation of the core activities as reflected in stakeholder and end-user surveys. In particular, the RRCs, which are reported to be of highest value, receive support from relatively few donors (Annex E); and they have actually declined in their share of GDN's overall program expenditures, from about 38 percent in FY02 to about 30 percent in FY08. There have also been wide variations in the absolute as well as per unit expenditures for GRPs, without much accompanying evidence to date of direct and indirect outputs much less outcomes from them.

3.50 ***Administrative costs.*** While noting that it was not able to collect administrative data from other similar research organizations to ensure comparability, the 2007 evaluation finds that GDN has "generally reasonable" administrative costs and "generally predictable" delivery of services (with some notable exceptions with network partners and slow or delayed rollout of GDNet services largely beyond its control). Specifically, the evaluation reports that GDN's programs and services constitute close to 90 percent of its budget — a low overhead level for any organization. These findings, which include the $190,000 costs for relocation from Washington to New Delhi, are improvements over those of the prior evaluation, especially as regards decreasing Annual Conference expenditures.

3.51 Subsequently, GDN has made its own cost-effectiveness assessment, which indicates that GDN operates at relatively low cost compared to several other research institutions of similar or larger size. Table 6 presents the cost comparisons as compiled by GDN. In addition, GDN's assessment shows a decline in its expenditures for its administrative and support services from $640,425, or 8.60 percent of its total revenue in 2005 to $397,179, or 4.28 percent of total annual revenue in 2007.[37]

3.52 ***Financial management.*** An independent assessment of GDN's financial management, commissioned by the World Bank and conducted in May 2007, concluded that GDN practices satisfied the Bank's minimum financial management requirements. The

Table 6. Cost-Effectiveness Comparison with Other Research Organizations

	GDN (2007)	Centre for Economic Policy Research (2003)	Center for Global Development (2004)	Brookings (2006)	International Development Research Centre (2007)
Total Budget	$9.26 m	$5.15 m	$11.56 m	$70.75 m	$170.00 m
Administrative and support services	4.28%	4.45%	5.37%	10.04%	18.45%

Source: Strategic Review, p. 25.

Notes:

(1) Dates indicate most recent available.

(2) Administrative and support services include general oversight, business management, general record keeping, budgeting, finance and other management related activities, exclusive of direct staff and secretariat costs allocated to project activities.

37. Strategic Review, p. 25.

assessment found that staff have requisite functional experience and its financial management arrangements are capable of recording all transactions and balances, supporting preparation of regular reliable financial statements and safeguarding assets, and are subject to acceptable auditing arrangements. It, therefore, gave GDN's practices an overall satisfactory rating, although it found that GDN did not have adequate processes in place to ensure proper use of sub-grants and that fiduciary risks in the use of sub-grants were significant. It recommended that GDN take corrective actions that GDN has since implemented.

4. Governance, Management, and Financial Sustainability

4.1 GDN's governance and management structures work moderately well in guiding and implementing program activities. Also, the organization has improved its financial position in recent years by mobilizing larger and more diversified sources of funding. But further improvements in all three areas are needed, as acknowledged in the organization's 2008 Strategic Review and the early efforts of GDN's current president. Key issues include:

- Strengthening board oversight of the business aspects of GDN operations
- Improving working relations with GDN's partners, notably the RNPs
- Addressing the constraints posed by the prevailing mode of earmarked donor funding.

4.2 ***Governance.*** GDN's main governing bodies are: (1) an Assembly comprised of governments that are signatories to the Charter establishing GDN as an international organization and (2) a governing Board of Directors. While the Assembly is the super-body above the Board — with the authority to dissolve the organization — the active strategic direction and management oversight of the organization is expected to be exercised by the Board. As of the writing of this review, only three governments had ratified the new GDN Charter, and the Assembly has not yet met. So the effectiveness of this arrangement is unknown.

4.3 The Board, which has functioned since the startup of GDN, convenes twice a year with one of the meetings occurring at the GDN Annual Conference. It is largely a constituency-based board — currently comprised of 18 directors, of which 10 are nominated by and represent GDN's RNPs and three represent international professional associations. In addition, the Board comprises two senior representatives of GDN donor agencies — the World Bank and UNDP, while the remaining three members are "at large." Unless a special exception is made, Board members rotate after two-year terms — which has posed problems in the past of high turnover resulting in limited institutional memory.

4.4 On the whole, GDN's governance complies well in practice with its five "principles of governance (para. 1.17). The governance structure is — and is perceived by stakeholders to be — independent of governments. It is also perceived by stakeholders to be legitimately representative of the research community that GDN is designed to serve.[38] Although some

38. This perception of legitimacy reflects in large part the fact that GDN consulted widely on the establishment of its governance structure and has followed an "inclusive and participatory selection process." Independent

stakeholders criticize the continuing predominance of economists on the Board, there are now some directors from other social science disciplines.

4.5 The functioning of the Board has become increasingly effective over time. Many problems in the early years have by now been addressed. Notably, GDN's move to independent status largely resolved issues stemming from its initial close ties to the World Bank — in particular confusion about the roles and responsibilities of the Bank and GDN's Board.[39] In 2005, to address inefficiencies in its governance operations, GDN established three subcommittees (audit, executive, and program) of the Board which confer in between full Board meetings.[40] In particular, the Executive Committee, serves for the full Board in-between meetings. It is a group of appointed Board members who are willing to devote more time to the organization (not intentionally representative of the Board constituencies) each of whom is consulted either by email or telephone for advice/decisions throughout the year as need arises. Also in 2005, GDN created a donor advisory council.[41] There is no structural link between the Council and GDN's Board or Secretariat and the Council has no formal role, but it serves to foster donor coordination and to improve communications among donors and between GDN and interested funders.

4.6 Further improvements to strengthen the strategic direction and oversight roles of the Board, recommended in the 2007 evaluation, have since been implemented or taken under consideration by GDN management and Board.[42] The main measures aim to achieve: (1) greater transparency in the process of choosing Board members, (2) processes to guarantee that some Board members have experience in managing organizations and boards, and (3) processes to balance the democratic thrust of two-year terms with the need for increased institutional memory on the Board. While it is too soon to know what effect these measures will have in further strengthening the functioning of the Board, interviewees state that key stakeholders are optimistic about current directions of change. The interviewees also offer three reasons for this optimism: (1) new Board leadership with strong research and policy credibility; (2) lessons learned about the profile of good board members for GDN's type of program; and (3) the functioning of the Executive Committee.

4.7 Still, this review sees some unresolved shortcomings of GDN's governance arrangements. Good governance entails separation of oversight/approval functions from management and program setting. The current composition of GDN's Board, with 10 out of 20 board members representing the RNPs, combines both functions and serves neither well. On the one hand, the 10 RNP representatives are in the ambiguous position of representing the interests of their own regions while also exercising strategic direction and oversight of GDN performance overall (including the performance of their own RNP). On the other hand, the management heads

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Evaluation Group (formerly Operations Evaluation Department), "The World Bank's Approach to Global Programs: Phase 2 Report: The Global Development Network," December 2004, pp 17-18.

39. Ibid.

40. Identified as a major weakness in the 2004 evaluation.

41. This step was in lieu of a recommendation of the 2004 evaluation that GDN add one or more donor representatives to the Board, which was rejected by all GDN stakeholders groups.

42. GDN Management Response presented in Annex C.

of the RNPs should ideally be involved in the research agenda-setting function, which is currently the responsibility of the GDN Board. One possible alternative might be to establish a separate research advisory body (including the heads of the RNPs among others) and to focus the business of the Board on broad strategic direction and program oversight.

4.8 ***Management.*** GDN's day-to-day operations are managed by its Secretariat, comprising a President and some 30 staff. The number of staff represents a significant increase over the past few years in response to a number of pressures. Notably, GDN has bolstered its fundraising and human resource management capabilities in response to recommendations of the 2007 evaluation. In addition, GDN has added staff to strengthen its communication and policy outreach efforts and to accommodate the choice of GDN to be the host of the new 3ie. While most of the increase has been of staff in New Delhi, the GDNet office in Cairo, as noted above, has also expanded its functions and staff complement.

4.9 Over the years, stakeholders have expressed high regard for the professionalism, efficiency, and probity of the GDN Secretariat staff. That view is confirmed by the two independent evaluations and by interviews conducted for this review. Less certain is how well the staff structure matches the program priorities of GDN, and how staff time is allocated across activities. There is also an issue of whether GDNet is less well linked into the overall program of activities than would be the case if it was based in the Secretariat headquarters in New Delhi. But this may be less a case of location than of adequate program strategy. While in the past there was some concern that GDN's president had strong research but only limited experience in the policy and fundraising realms, there were widespread expressions of support for the broad range of research, policy, and fundraising experience of the second president, appointed in 2007. It remains to be seen who GDN will find as its next president, following the unexpected departure of the current leadership.

4.10 ***Relations with regional network partners.*** GDN's working relationships with its RNPs are an additional element of its governance and management arrangement. The prevailing view across GDN stakeholders is that the RNPs are the cornerstone of the program. "The RNPs are GDN's strength."[43] Also, both the 2004 and 2007 independent evaluations found this structural element consistent with GDN's purposes. Yet, the RNPs, other stakeholders, and the 2004 and 2007 evaluations share the view that the working relationship between GDN and the RNPs is not well developed and should be enhanced to get greater benefit out of the global network.

4.11 The prevailing view is that GDN needs to clarify and considerably strengthen its working relationships with the RNPs. In working across regions GDN cannot afford to have a uniform mission, but it should have a broader mission that encompasses flexibility and responsiveness to prevailing conditions in each partner constituency. Three areas in particular are in apparent need of improvement. First, GDN needs to do better in dealing with the variations in the capacity and performance of the different RNPs in building research excellence and informing policy — especially for the newer RNPs for whom GDN is a relatively significant source of support. Second, GDN needs to strengthen its global services to the RNPs where there is potential for effectiveness and efficiency gains through such undertakings as cross-regional capacity building,

43. Interview for this review.

standard setting, and fund-raising. As expressed in interviews for this review, while views vary among the RNPs as to the contribution to date of GDN's regionally based activities and support, those that existed before GDN was formed point out, in particular, that GDN has not succeeded in boosting resource mobilization as originally intended. Third, GDN needs to adjust how it operates to increase the RNP's voice in the design and implementation of GDN activities — thus making them true partners.

4.12 In the past year, GDN's management and Board have made the strengthening and deepening of relations with RNPs a major focus of their Strategic Review and plans for the next several years. Notably, they have identified and begun to address a number of "challenges," specifically to: enhance the horizontal cooperation among RNPs; improve vertical links between the GDN Secretariat and RNPs; further develop differentiated programs and institutional capacity-building support by region; and find ways to increase the allocations for RRCs and the resource base of the RNPs. In interviews for this review, RNP coordinators commended GDN's recent efforts. In particular, they gave high praise for a first meeting of the GDN Secretariat and RNP coordinators in 2008; the introduction of new inter-regional research projects (an idea that emerged out of the meeting); and joint fundraising. Given findings about the relevance, comparative advantage, and effectiveness of GDN in promoting and disseminating research for better policy-making, there would seem to be no higher priority for the organization in the coming years than to move effectively in these directions.

4.13 ***Financial sustainability.*** GDN has made some progress in increasing the scale and diversity of its funding, especially in recent years. As shown in Table 7, as of 2008, GDN received a total of $9.3 million from 16 donors compared to $7.1 million from 10 donors in 2005. While one donor, Italy dropped out for reasons of its shifting assistance priorities, others have joined largely as a result of GDN's efforts in marketing its program and achievements. The recent increase in financing included first-time support in 2007 from seven new donors to GDN. This is a notable improvement over the earlier period 2005–07, when it experienced a three-year decline in funds (due primarily to reduced support from the World Bank not compensated for by increased or new funding from others)and failed to meet the financial goals of its 2005–07 Strategic Plan.

4.14 Still, resource mobilization and financial sustainability remain major challenges for GDN — a common situation for all organizations like it that do not have an endowment or generate earnings from their own activities. Currently its "donor map" reflects:

- Continuing dependence on some 2–3 donors (including the World Bank) for over 65 percent of total resources
- Many small donors, entailing high transaction costs for GDN management
- Low levels of support from private and developing country sources
- High risks of losing some donors in any year (e.g., the government of Italy in 2006)
- Very high rigidity in the uses to which funding can be put, with the bulk linked to specific projects and not fungible across activities for interaction with and institution building support to RNPs. (The extent of this earmarking of contributions is shown in Annex E: donor support by activity.)[44]

44. Strategic Review, p. 21.

Table 7. GDN Revenue from Donors (FY05–FY08)

Donors	FY05	FY06	FY07	FY08
AFESD				
AUSAID	22,716	233,141	280,000	480,000
Austria		260,728		
DFID		537,374	945,399	916,621
ESRC (UK)			98,806	
Finland			102,720	146,470
France	15,000	61,451	131,601	140,119
Gates Foundation			2,500,000	2,000,000
IDRC	99,097	162,617	172,565	72,808
India		99,360		
Irish Aid			53,492	
Italy	1,156,150	69,265		
JBIC	120,040			
Luxembourg	97,980	312,236	29,751	138,495
Merck		100,000		
Netherlands			328,000	656,190
Norway			59,509	97,500
NZAid				60,609
PHRD	400,000	300,000	190,000	190,000
Saudi Arabia			50,000	
Spain				146,415
Sweden		105,000	133,000	69,000
UNDP				390,000
USAID	144,530	67,573		
World Bank (DGF/Other)	4,862,500	4,100,00	3,704,786	3,500,000
Others	9,600	16,689	40,137	
In Kind				
Austria			308,400	337,000
IMF		49,000		
World Bank	130,626	112,262		
Total	7,058,239	2,486,696	9,128,166	9,341,227

Source: GDN Secretariat.

4.15 In planning for how to grapple with its financial situation, GDN's Strategic Review highlights the organization's need to: (a) expand its overall resource envelope by further increasing its donor base, attracting new donors, and improving donors' perceptions of GDN's demonstrated value added; (b) strengthen multiyear commitments and raising more fungible resources; and (c) build an endowment fund. The Strategic Review also sets out a

resource mobilization strategy for increasing resources by no less than a base case of 10–20 percent a year and a high case of 50–100 percent over the three years to 2010. In addition, it outlines four major risks to advancing its resource strategy (especially to achieve its higher case scenario). These risks, and the steps GDN sees as needed to meet them and protect GDN from future abrupt fluctuations, are listed in Box 2. Clearly, GDN is right to emphasize the extent of the financing challenge it faces.

Box 2. Risk and Risk Mitigation Measures

Major risks confronting GDN as identified in its Strategic Review are:

(1) World Bank funding decreases

(2) Share of fungible resources continues to decrease

(3) Tensions grow between donor preferences for research and GDN/RNP comparative advantages

(4) There is no regional commitment to collaboration

Risk mitigation measures outlined in the Strategic Review are:

(1) Demonstrate GDN's value added and effectiveness

(2) Secure multiyear funding from current donors

(3) Diversify the donor base by targeting new donors with an emphasis on multiyear commitments

(4) Actively explore synergies for collaboration and joint funding with centers of excellence worldwide (both North and South)

(5) Explore possibilities for securing an endowment

(6) Recruit a professional fund-raiser as GDN staff

Source: Strategic Review, p. 22.

5. The World Bank's Performance as a Partner

5.1 The World Bank was the founder and has been the major donor of the GDN. It has also been a member of the Board from the start, and Bank staff — retired and current — have so far provided the leadership of the Secretariat and participated in the organization's Annual Conferences and other activities. Through these multiple roles the Bank has contributed crucial financial support and valued technical assistance to GDN. But there has been disagreement within the Bank about the effectiveness and continuation of DGF grant funding, and staff oversight has only been moderately adequate.

Initiation and Incubation

5.2 The World Bank conceived of and initiated the GDN in the late 1990s as part of a broader interest in increasing the capacity of research and policy institutions in developing countries to produce high-quality, policy-oriented research that could feed into local policy-making. This interest was seen as consistent with the Bank's stated objective of "putting countries in the driver's seat" in designing their own development strategies. It was also seen as a way to generate research that could feed into the design of Bank projects, ESW, and

policy advice as well as generate independent analysis on key global issues affecting developing countries. As noted above, broad-ranging external consultations organized by the Bank confirmed the relevance of such an initiative and endorsed GDN's establishment.

5.3 External consultations also indicated that the Bank had a distinct comparative advantage in initiating the network. There were three reasons for this. First, the Bank was already helping to support development research networks in different regions of the world and had experience in working with and helping create independent regional networks.[45] Second it had both the financial resources and multicountry research expertise that could be useful to the success of a global research capacity-building effort. Third, experience suggested that World Bank support could help to leverage the funds of other donors. The first two of these strengths have been widely perceived as highly valuable in supporting the development and operations of GDN; but, as discussed below, the leveraging effect of the World Bank on other donors has not been as consequential as expected.

5.4 To jump-start the initiative and because there was no existing operational program within the Bank aimed at generating more and better research from within developing countries, GDN was launched as a unit of the Bank with a member of the Bank staff as the program's first director. This arrangement led to some early outside criticism that the GDN was too Bank-dominated and some perceptions that the Bank was trying to use GDN to support research that served its own purposes and policy views. These concerns reinforced the Bank's original intent to move GDN outside the Bank and to establish it as an independent organization. The initial program director moved as well, retiring from the Bank and becoming the independent GDN's first president. The move was favorably endorsed inside and outside the Bank. It was a comparatively quick and efficient "spin off," and it eased international worries that GDN was too much a "creature of the World Bank."

5.5 Still, GDN's relationship with the World Bank remains an evolving one, with several issues unsettled at the time of this review. One issue is the right amount and kind of substantive engagement between the Bank and GDN. GDN has, over the years, enlisted individual Bank staff (current and retired) as participants and advisers in conferences and research projects. While a minority view continues to see too dominant a presence of Bank thinking in all GDN work, the prevailing view of GDN stakeholders is that the Bank's expertise has been extremely useful. Also, those responsible for GDN within the Bank and GDN's current senior management think that, in an effort to prove GDN's independence, the Secretariat in the early years distanced the organization too much from substantive engagement with relevant Network and Regional units of the Bank. As a result, substantive interaction between the Bank and GDN researchers and research projects is seen as less than optimal both for GDN research capacity building and Bank engagement with capable researchers and institutions in developing and transition countries. As GDN has matured and increasingly strengthened its own international reputation, both parties contend that the Bank

45. For example, it had contributed to the AERC since the late 1980s and helped create the EADN in June 1999.

and GDN would benefit from broader and deeper substantive interactions.[46] Two other major issues are the Bank's performance in providing strategic guidance and its financial support.

Strategic Guidance

5.6 The Bank has played a role in providing strategic guidance to GDN through its membership on the governing board. To date, three senior Bank staff have served on the Board, and each has received high praise from other Board members and GDN management for their significant input and, often, leadership of strategic deliberations. For example, the Bank's representatives were seen as instrumental in helping to resolve a dispute leading to the withdrawal of one of GDN's RNPs from participation, shaping the two independent evaluations, and encouraging the move to New Delhi which helped GDN become a more cost-effective organization.

5.7 Yet, the lack of clarity in GDN's program priorities and strategies raises questions about the adequacy of the Bank's degree of engagement in the oversight and strategic direction of GDN. This issue is particularly fraught in the case of GDN, which was founded and has continued to be heavily funded by the Bank, and on which the Bank sits as a member of the board. GDN, from its early days, has relied on Bank funding but also sought to avoid the appearance of being Bank-dominated. At the same time, the Bank, by assuming a position on the Board, has had a responsibility to push for strategic clarity and direction, and it is implicated in the organization's weakness in this regard. Its multiple partnership roles have also created a tension for the Bank's representative on GDN's Board between responsibility to the organization and to the Bank as donor.

5.8 Moreover, the Bank is not an active member of the GDN's donor advisory council, established to improve communication among GDN donors, and between them and the Secretariat and Board, on GDN priorities and program planning. Indeed, one donor on the advisory council, while praising the Bank's initiation and continued support of GDN, contends that the Bank is not a "team player" and not adequately engaged in fostering coordinated and coherent support for GDN.

Funding

5.9 The World Bank has contributed a total of approximately $45.6 million to GDN over fiscal years 1998–2008. The bulk of this support has been in the form of DGF grants. In the fiscal years 1998–2001, when GDN operated as a unit within the Bank, DGF disbursed some $12.1 million on behalf of GDN directly to regional research networks and institutions as they became GDN partners. Thereafter, from the inception of GDN as an independent organization through FY08, the World Bank has provided some $31.5 million in core support to GDN through its DGF window 1 facility. This DGF grant support has amounted in total to some 54 percent of GDN expenses in the period since FY02, as shown in Table 8.

46. Collaboration of the World Bank Institute with GDNet in the conduct of capacity-building workshops on knowledge management in Burkina Faso, Egypt, and India is a recent example of useful, broadened interaction.

5.10 In addition, through the first five years of GDN's independent status, the World Bank contributed about $2 million from its administrative budget to the organization's operating expenses (of which $50,000 supported its move to New Delhi in 2005). This support reflected a commitment made by then-Bank President James Wolfensohn, formalized in a Memorandum of Understanding between the Bank and GDN, to underwrite up to $1.8 million in operating costs of GDN's Secretariat in Washington for five years. The MOU also specified that this support would be reviewed at midpoint and would be continued provided that: (1) the assessment of the GDN activities is judged to be positive, (2) donor support exceeds $10 million a year and exhibits an upward trend, and (3) donor support for the Secretariat exceeds $0.5 million a year and is on track for meeting at least 50 percent of the Secretariat's costs by the end of FY06. Although the financial conditions were not met, the Bank carried through with its commitment of five years of operating support.

5.11 As indicated by Table 8, GDN has not been successful in leveraging DGF support to generate additional funding equal to 85 percent of the program's budget, which is the DGF target guideline.[47] According to those guidelines, any single grant to a recipient "should generally not exceed 15 percent of expected funding over the life of Bank funding to a given program, or over the rolling 3-year plan period, whichever is shorter. Where grant programs belong to new areas of activities, ... the target for the Bank grant not to exceed 15 percent of total expected funding will be pursued after allowing for an initial start-up phase (maximum 3 years)."[48]

Table 8. World Bank Support to GDN from Its Inception as an Independent Organization through FY08 ($US millions)

Fiscal Years	2002 /1	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Total
DGF grants /2	5.5	5.9	5.6	4.0	3.5	3.5	3.5	31.5
Administrative budget	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3			2.0
Total Bank support	6.0	6.3	6.0	4.4	3.8	3.5	3.5	33.5
Total GDN expenses	7.3	10.4	8.6	7.2	6.6	8.6	9.1	57.8
DGF grants as percentage of total GDN expenses	75%	57%	65%	55%	53%	41%	38%	54%

Sources: DGF grants — project internal order; Administrative budget — GDN internal memos; GDN expenses — annual audited statements.

Notes:

1. From inception of GDN status as an independent organization in March 2001
2. Exclusive of $229,000 for separate HDN education initiative managed by GDN allocated in FY04–06

47. Note that the information in the table is the percentage of GDN expenses covered by DGF funding each year rather than the percentage of donor contributions accounted for by DGF because contributions fluctuate from year to year depending on donors' funding cycles and the DGF grant is supposed to be spent in the fiscal year in which it is received.

48. DGF eligibility criteria, *The Development Grant Facility: FY98 DGF Annual Review and Proposed FY99 Budget*, October 28, 1998, p. 39.

5.12 Yet, in the case of GDN, Bank staff have repeatedly presented exaggerated expectations while seeking DGF funding. In 2005, an internal review of overall DGF funding priorities recommended that DGF support for GDN should be phased out within three years because of lack of progress in obtaining support from other donors and establishing GDN as a true global partnership. DEC and PREM, the two sponsoring units for GDN within the Bank, successfully argued to maintain funding at near current levels for another three years (FY06–08), while also recommending that the Bank should not cover more than 33 percent of GDN costs by FY08 (which would represent a significant decline from the level of 55 percent in FY05). In fact, the Bank's share of GDN expenses did decline significantly in the three years, but not to the recommended level and a subsequent proposal for another three years of support (through fiscal year 2011) anticipates Bank support at a level of 23 percent of total revenue for the full cycle.

5.13 Thus, at this time the percentage of Bank support remains above the DGF guideline and GDN remains heavily dependent on Bank financial support. This heavy dependence is related not only to the dollar amount of Bank support. As noted above, the Bank is one of only three donors currently providing core program support (the other two at much lower levels) and its funding is the main source of GDN support through the RRCs to local researchers.[49]

5.14 From GDN's point of view, a further decrease in Bank support in the absence of other support for non-project funding poses a serious risk for the organization. In addition, there is a risk for the individual RNPs who get World Bank support through GDN. For some of these RNPs, such as the AERC, the Bank had provided support directly prior to the establishment of GDN. While the shift in funding to the regional networks through a single DGF grant to GDN was a convenience for the Bank, these individual RNPs have felt this to be a lessening of the opportunity for evolving support from the Bank and as a risk of loss of support overall.

Oversight

5.15 Bank oversight of its partnership with GDN resided in the PREM VPU from 1999–2003, and thereafter has resided in the DEC VPU, which also serves as the sponsoring unit for GDN funding requests to DGF. Ongoing responsibility for monitoring financial and operational performance is carried out by a Global Program Task Team Leader in the responsible VPU, who also provides support to the World Bank representative on the GDN Board.[50]

5.16 In practice, Bank oversight and accountability have been weak throughout the life of the GDN program. There are three reasons for this weakness. First, the positioning for responsibility of GDN got off to a rocky start. PREM served as the first sponsoring unit even

49. Indeed, it is worth noting that prior to this funding arrangement, the Bank was directly funding regional research networks such as AERC. This direct support ended when the decision was taken to route support through GDN — an arrangement that at least AERC has found to be a negative outcome of the establishment of GDN. In AERC's view, the change has weakened its working relationship with the Bank without any compensating enhancement in its ability to mobilize resources.

50. The TTL and the Bank's representative were the same person for two years, 2006–07.

though the initiation, design, and primary interest in GDN came from DEC. While this initial arrangement had the potential benefit of establishing two overseers and champions for the partnership, this did not work well. Indeed, the two units differed on the rationale for the Bank's interest in GDN. While DEC emphasized the value of GDN as a way to build analytical capacity in developing countries that could inform countries' own policies, PREM looked for GDN contributions to Bank operations; and this led to differing views on the effectiveness of GDN activities and on the case for continuing support. In 2004 DEC became the responsible VPU, a change that helped align the interest in the program with the responsibility for overseeing it. But other weaknesses in oversight have persisted.

5.17 A second weakness has been the failure to keep adequate records, especially with each successive move of GDN. Indeed, this review was unable to retrieve most annual progress reports and funding requests to the DGF from GDN, DEC, or the DGF — each unit explaining that they should be available from one of the other units.

5.18 Finally, while oversight of GDN financial management has been satisfactory,[51] there has been poor reporting of the Bank's internal expenditures associated with GDN. For example, this IEG review was unable to find any reporting for GDN from 2002–08 in the Bank's cost accounting system, meaning that the Bank's representatives and task team leaders have been charging their time against some other activity, if at all. The present review was also unable to obtain a formal record of the $2.0 million which the Bank provided from its administrative budget to help cover the operating costs of the GDN Secretariat during the five-year period set out in the Bank-GDN MOU.

Exit Strategy

5.19 The Bank does not have an explicit strategy for exiting its partnership with GDN, and those responsible for overseeing the program argue that it is too soon to set out such a strategy. GDN disengaged from the Bank legally and physically in 2001. Financially there has been a reduction in the share of Bank support, though the reduction has consistently failed to meet successive target levels set as a condition for continued support and fallen well short of the DGF 15 percent guideline.

5.20 In internal documents and interviews for this IEG review, current and past Bank task team leaders and representatives offered several reasons for continuing support prior to developing an exit strategy. Notably, they emphasized that:

- GDN is still young. Typically, it takes 15–20 years for an organization of its kind to become fully established, and before the Bank can responsibly develop an exit strategy. Having moved successfully beyond its start-up phase, GDN needed to consolidate its programmatic and financial position following its move to India, shift to international organization status, and renovation under new leadership.
- GDN objectives remain closely aligned with the Bank's interest in fostering analytical and knowledge capacity in developing and transition countries.

51. World Bank commissioned financial management assessment, May 2007.

- The research community in developing and developed countries values GDN and praises the Bank's role in it. The community would strongly oppose a Bank withdrawal anytime soon, especially given the positive findings of the recent evaluation.
- Although GDN has made substantial strides in recent years to increase and diversify its sources of funding, donors are unlikely to step in to compensate for a complete withdrawal of Bank support in the near term. There is danger this may, instead, create program and reputational risks for GDN and, by implication, for the Bank as its founder and major champion.

5.21 Overall, the funding history suggests a lack of realism on the Bank's part about its ability to leverage other donor resources, and/or the lack of a sufficient effort by the Bank's senior management and representative on the Board to help GDN mobilize resources. In addition, the funding history suggests a weakness in the way that the Bank approaches the idea of an "exit strategy" for an activity that by its very nature takes time to have effect. To date, thinking about an exit strategy seems to be focused on the timing of Bank withdrawal, rather than on how to assist GDN (as well as the RNPs, now funded indirectly by the Bank through GDN) in developing and implementing a sound strategy for achieving financial sustainability — including how to actively help GDN with the planning and resource mobilization effort that such a strategy would have to entail. While the Bank may not choose to play this role in all partnerships in which it participates, certainly for a global partnership of its "invention," it needs to commit itself to a major engagement in securing the initiative's financial sustainability. Setting and then ignoring guidelines for continued funding is not an adequate approach.

6. Lessons Learned

6.1 The review of GDN's relevance and effectiveness highlights six main lessons, of which four are relevant to design and implementation of global programs and two are relevant to the Bank's support of such programs.

6.2 ***Effectiveness depends on a theory of change and explicit strategies for achieving outcome objectives.*** GDN's moderate performance to date highlights the importance of having a well-articulated theory of change and related operational strategies for achieving intended program results. As GDN shows, these design features are especially important for a program that aims to achieve results — such as capacity building and policy influence — that are not easy to quantify or attribute directly to program activities. GDN has a vision of the future it wants to help create. It has been explicit about its overarching and related program objectives — of generating high-quality, policy-relevant research, building research capacity, and informing policy. It has also been successful in carrying out a menu of activities in pursuit of those program objectives. But it lacks a road map (or logical framework) for how to get to its outcome objectives and strategies to guide and integrate the activities needed to achieve them. Thus, as evaluations show, there is limited evidence of GDN's capacity-building impact despite its claim that capacity building is a central aim of its

RRC, GRP, and GDAMC activities; and the research activities as well as GDNet have yet to develop effective policy outreach functions.

6.3 ***Global networks require well-defined roles and responsibilities for their constituent parts.*** Global networks may link together many types of constituent parts, ranging from individuals to national, regional, and/or international organizations. In all cases, it is essential for success that the constituent parts know and accept their respective roles and responsibilities for achieving agreed objectives. GDN rests on the assumption that there is knowledge to be gained and cost-efficiencies to be achieved by promoting research collaboration and exchange of experience on a global scale across regions. But its experience also shows the shortcomings of operating with limited horizontal connection across regional network partners, limited vertical communication and support between the central secretariat and the regions, and inadequately differentiated programs of support from the center for the differing needs of the regions. GDN's maximum value added would come from operating as a true network of networks that addresses these shortcomings.

6.4 ***It is difficult to design and implement a coherent global program without a sufficient level of core funding to allow for the implementation of results-based strategies and the coordination of activities in support of those activities.*** As GDN's revenues have grown, they have become increasingly project-tied and non-fungible. While these projects have enabled GDN to expand its support of developing world research and voice, the dominance of earmarked funding impedes GDN's ability to support its regional partners and to design and link activities in ways that could best advance its threefold objectives of research generation, capacity building, and policy outreach.

6.5 ***There are weaknesses in a governance arrangement in which the governing board is responsible for setting the program agenda as well as strategic direction and oversight.*** Governing boards are responsible for ensuring that their organizations and programs run effectively and efficiently to advance their goals. This means watching that activities are consistent with core objectives, management is capable, and operations are based on adequate and sound financing. Where a board both sets and overseas a program agenda, it risks shorting its strategic stewardship role and obscuring the voice of the program's target beneficiaries in defining what is needed to achieve core objectives. Although GDN's governing board has become more efficient in recent years, due in part to the introduction of an Executive Committee and two other program committees, issues of broad strategic direction and financial sustainability would seem to require more Board attention, while choices of GRP and other research activities might be better left to a non-Board research advisory body (including the management heads of the RNPs among others).

6.6 ***A realistic commitment by the Bank is required in establishing a donor-dependent program with a long-term objective.*** GDN demonstrates that it can take time to attract donor support for a Bank-initiated program, if the program is not a broad multidonor partnership from the outset and, in particular, if the program aims to advance goals that are long-term and intangible (such as research capacity building). This suggests that timetables for the reduction of World Bank support need to be better calibrated to the nature of specific programs than is currently the case with DGF guidelines. It also suggests that exit strategies should be devised from the outset that not only set out a schedule for termination of Bank

support but also describe what assistance the Bank commits to provide to help the organization plan and achieve its long-term financial sustainability commensurate with the Bank's interest in the program.

6.7 ***The Bank needs to develop strengthened guidelines for its participation, and the accountability of its performance, in global partnerships.*** The Bank's accountability of its partnership role has been weak throughout the life of GDN. This weakness has been evidenced by repeated and exaggerated expectations in seeking DGF funding; poor record keeping; and understatements in progress reports of GDN's lack of clarity and strategic direction in achieving its intended outcomes. This problem has been particularly severe in the case of a global program such as GDN, which has been founded and funded by the Bank and on which the Bank has served as a member of the governing board — thereby creating a tension for the Bank's representative between responsibility to the organization and to the Bank as donor. The Bank's engagement with GDN demonstrates the need for clear guidelines especially in regard to (a) standards of program design and performance to be expected in situations of continuing Bank support, and (b) the roles and responsibilities to be exercised by Bank program managers, task team leaders, and representatives on partnership boards.

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Annex A. Evaluation Framework for Global Program Reviews

Note: This evaluation framework is a general framework that has been designed to cover the wide range of such programs in which the World Bank is involved, encompassing policy and knowledge networks, technical assistance programs, and investment programs. It is not expected that every global program review will cover every question in this table in detail.

Table A-1. Assessing the Independence and Quality of the Evaluation

Evaluation Questions
1. Evaluation process To what extent was the GRPP evaluation independent of the management of the program, according to the following criteria: • Organizational independence? • Behavioral independence and protection from interference? • Avoidance of conflicts of interest? Factors to take into account in answering these questions include: • Who commissioned and managed the evaluation? • Who approved the terms of reference and selected the evaluation team? • To whom the evaluation team reported, and how the evaluation was reviewed? • Any other factors that hindered the independence of the evaluation such as an inadequate budget, or restrictions on access to information, travel, sampling, etc.?
2. Monitoring and evaluation framework of the program To what extent was the evaluation based on an effective M&E framework of the program with: • Clear and coherent objectives and strategies that give focus and direction to the program? • An expected results chain or logical framework? • Measurable indicators that meet the monitoring and reporting needs of the governing body and management of the program? • Systematic and regular processes for collecting and managing data?
3. Evaluation approach and scope To what extent was the evaluation objectives-based and evidence-based? To what extent did the evaluation use a results-based framework — constructed either by the program or by the evaluators? To what extent did the evaluation address: • Relevance • Efficacy • Efficiency or cost-effectiveness • Governance and management • Resource mobilization and financial management • Sustainability, risk, and strategy for devolution or exit
4. Evaluation instruments To what extent did the evaluation utilize the following instruments: • Desk and document review • Literature review • Consultations/interviews and with whom • Structured surveys and of whom • Site visits and for what purpose: for interviewing implementers/beneficiaries, or for observing activities being implemented or completed • Case studies • Other

Evaluation Questions
5. Evaluation feedback To what extent have the findings of the evaluation been reflected in: • The objectives, strategies, design, or scale of the program? • The governance, management, and financing of the program? • The monitoring and evaluation framework of the program?

Table A-2. Providing an Independent Opinion on the Effectiveness of the Program

Every review is expected to cover the first four criteria in the following table: (a) relevance, (b) efficacy, (c) efficiency, and (d) governance and management. A review may also cover (e) resource mobilization and financial management and (f) sustainability, risk, and strategies for devolution or exit if the latter are important issues for the program at the time of GPR, and if there is sufficient information available on which to base an independent opinion.

Evaluation Criteria and Questions
Relevance: The extent to which the objectives and design of the program are consistent with (a) current global/regional challenges and concerns in a particular development sector and (b) the needs and priorities of beneficiary countries and groups.
1. Supply-side relevance — the existence of an international consensus that global/regional collective action is required. To what extent does the program reflect an international consensus on the need for action, on the definition of the problem being addressed, on priorities, and on strategies for action? Is the original consensus that led to the creation of the program still present? Is the program still needed to address specific global/regional public concerns? Take into account the origin of the program in answering these questions: • Is the program formally responsible for implementing an international convention? • Did the program arise out of an international conference? • Is the program facilitating the implementation of formal standards and approaches? • Is the program primarily donor-driven? Did donors establish the program with little consultation with developing countries? • Is the program primarily Bank-driven? Did the World Bank found the program and then seek other partners?
2. Demand-side relevance — alignment with beneficiary needs, priorities, and strategies. To what extent are the objectives consistent with the needs, priorities, and strategies of beneficiary countries as articulated in the countries' own PRSPs, and in donors' strategies such as the World Bank CASs, and the UN Development Assistance Frameworks? To what extent has the voice of developing and transition countries been expressed in the international consensus underlying the program?
3. Vertical relevance — consistency with the subsidiarity principle. To what extent are the activities of the program being carried out at the most appropriate level — global, regional, national, or local — in terms of efficiency and responsiveness to the needs of beneficiaries? To what extent are the activities of the program competing with or substituting for activities that individual donors or countries could do more efficiently by themselves? Pay particular attention to those programs that, on the face of it, are primarily supporting the provision of national or local public goods.

Evaluation Criteria and Questions
4. Horizontal relevance — the absence of alternative sources of supply. What is the comparative advantage, value added, or core competency of the program relative to other GRPPs with similar or complementary objectives? To what extent is the program providing additional funding, advocacy, or technical capacity that is otherwise unavailable to meet the program's objectives? To what extent are the good and services being provided by the program in the nature of public goods? Are there alternative ways of providing these goods and services, such as by the private sector under regular market conditions?
5. Relevance of the design of the program To what extent are the strategies and priority activities of the program appropriate for achieving its objectives? What are the major activities of the program: • Policy and knowledge networking? • Financing country and local-level technical assistance? • Financing investments to deliver national, regional, or global public goods? (See Annex Table 7.) Has the program articulated an expected results chain or logical framework, along with assumptions that relate the progress of activities with the achievement of the objectives? Does the results chain identify the extent to which the achievement of the objectives depends on the effective functioning of bureaucracies, markets, or collectivities? If so, to what extent are these assumptions valid? For programs providing global or regional public goods, is the design of the program consistent with the way in which the individual efforts of the partners contribute to the collective outcome for the program as a whole — whether "best shot", "summation", or "weakest link?"
Efficacy: The extent to which the program has achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, taking into account their relative importance.
6. Achievement of objectives To what extent have the stated objectives of the program been achieved, or has satisfactory progress been made towards achieving these objectives? To what extent are there implicit objectives that are well understood and agreed upon by the partners and to which the program should also be held accountable? To what extent are there any positive, unintended outcomes of the program that have been convincingly document? To what extent have these assessments by the program or the evaluation been evidence-based?
7. Progress of activities, outputs, and outcomes. To what extent has the program or the evaluation measured the progress of activities, outputs, and outcomes? How did the program or the evaluation aggregate its outputs and outcomes at all levels — global, regional, national, and local — to provide an overall summary of its results? To what extent have factors such as changes in the location of the program, its legal structure, or governance processes affected the outputs and outcomes of the program? To what extent have there been outcomes that can be uniquely attributed to the partnership itself — such as the scale of or joint activities made possible by its organizational setup as a GRPP, or its institutional linkages to a host organization?
8. Linkages to country or local-level activities. To what extent has the program established effective operational linkages with country-level activities, taking into account that: • The desired nature of these linkages will vary according to the objectives, design, and implementation of each program? • Positive outcomes at the country or local level are generally a joint product of both global/regional and county-level activities?

Evaluation Criteria and Questions
Efficiency or cost-effectiveness: Efficiency — the extent to which the program has converted or is expected to convert its resources/inputs (such as funds, expertise, time, etc.) economically into results. Cost-effectiveness — the extent to which the program has achieved or is expected to achieve its results at a lower cost compared with alternatives.
9. Efficiency To what extent is it possible to place a monetary value on the benefits arising from the activities of the program? To what extent has the program or the evaluation conducted impact evaluations of representative program activities? To what extent has the program or the evaluation analyzed the program's costs in broad categories (such as overhead vs. activity costs), and categorized the program's activities and associated benefits, even if these cannot be valued in monetary terms?
10. Cost-effectiveness To what extent is the program measuring up against its own business plans: • Has the program cost more or less than planned? How did it measure up against its own costing schedule? • Have there been any obvious cases of inefficiency or wasted resources? To what extent is the program delivering its activities cost-effectively in comparison with alternatives: • How do actual costs compare with benchmarks from similar programs or activities? • Are the overhead costs of governing and managing the program reasonable and appropriate in relation to the objectives and activities of the program? How does the program compare with traditional development assistance programs: • For beneficiary countries, has receiving the development assistance through the GRPP increased the transactions costs compared with traditional development assistance programs? • For donors, has delivering the development assistance through the GRPP reduced donor costs by harmonizing efforts among donors or by reducing overlapping work (such as through joint supervision, monitoring and evaluation)?
Governance and management: Governance — the structures, functions, processes, and organizational traditions that have been put in place within the context of a program's authorizing environment to ensure that the program is run in such a way that it achieves its objectives in an effective and transparent manner. Management — the day-to-day operation of the program within the context of the strategies, policies, processes, and procedures that have been established by the governing body. Whereas governance is concerned with "doing the right thing," management is concerned with "doing things right."
11. Compliance with generally accepted principles of good governance. To what extent are the governance and management structures and processes well articulated and working well to bring about legitimate and effective governance and management? To what extent do governance and management practices comply with the following seven principles: • Legitimacy — the way in which governmental and managerial authority is exercised in relation to those with a legitimate interest in the program — including shareholders, other stakeholders, implementers, beneficiaries, and the community at large? • Accountability — the extent to which accountability is defined, accepted, and exercised along the chain of command and control within a program, starting with the annual general meeting of the members or parties at the top and going down to the executive board, the chief executive officer, task team leaders, implementers, and in some cases, to the beneficiaries of the program? • Responsibility — the extent to which the program accepts and exercises responsibility to stakeholders who are not directly involved in the governance of the program and who are not part of the direct chain of accountability in the implementation of the program?

Evaluation Criteria and Questions
• Fairness — the extent to which partners and participants, similarly situated, have equal opportunity to influence the program and to receive benefits from the program? • Transparency — the extent to which a program's decision making, reporting, and evaluation processes are open and freely available to the general public? • Efficiency — the extent to which the governance and management structures enhance efficiency or cost-effectiveness in the allocation and use of the program's resources? • Probity — the adherence by all persons in leadership positions to high standards of ethics and professional conduct over and above compliance with the rules and regulations governing the operation of the program?
12. Partnerships and participation To what extent has the program identified a complete list of stakeholders, or "stakeholder map", including the agreed-upon or perceived roles and responsibilities of the categories of stakeholders identified? To what extent is this a routine programmatic function, updated regularly, and transparently available? Has the program adopted primarily a shareholder model of governance (in which membership on the governing body is limited to financial and other contributors), or a stakeholder model (in which membership also includes non-contributors)? To what extent, if any, is the program's legitimacy being sacrificed in order to achieve greater efficiency, or vice-versa?
13. Programs located in host organizations To what extent is the location of the program in the Bank or other partner organization adversely affecting the governance, management, or other aspects of the program, such as compliance with the principles of transparency and fairness? For which functions is the program manager accountable to the host organization and the governing body of the program, respectively? Are conflicts of interest being managed appropriately? To what extent does the host organization play such a dominant role in the program, thereby reducing the incentives of other partners to participate effectively, or reducing the ability of the host organization to look at the weaknesses of the program objectively?
Resource mobilization and financial management: Resource mobilization — the processes by which resources are solicited by a program and provided by donors and partners. Financial management — the processes that govern the recording and use of funds, including allocation processes, crediting and debiting of accounts, controls that restrict use, accounting, and periodic financial reporting systems. In cases where funds accumulate over time, this would also include the management of the cash and investment portfolio.
14. Resource mobilization To what extent has the program succeeded in raising financial resources commensurate with its objectives? And from what sources — the Bank, bilateral donors, foundations, etc.? To what extent has the program succeeded in diversifying its funding beyond a small number of donors? To what extent are the sources of funding for the program (including donor restrictions on the use of resources) affecting, positively or negatively: • The strategic focus of the program? • The outputs and outcomes of the program? • The governance and management of the program? • The sustainability of the program?

Evaluation Criteria and Questions
15. Financial management Are there any issues that have emerged during the course of the review in relation to: • The quality of financial management and accounting? • The methods, criteria, and processes for allocating funds among different activities of the program? • Financial management during the early stages of the program?
Sustainability, risk, and strategy for devolution or exit: Sustainability — When applied to the activities of a program, the extent to which the benefits arising from these activities are likely to continue after the activities have been completed. When applied to a program itself, the extent to which the organization or program is likely to continue its operational activities over time. Devolution or exit strategy — a proactive strategy to change the design of a program, to devolve some of its implementation responsibilities, to reduce dependency on external funding, or to phase out the program on the grounds that it has achieved its objectives or that its current design is no longer the best way to sustain the results which the program has achieved.
16. Sustainability of the benefits of the program's activities What is the risk, at the time of evaluation, that the development outcomes (or expected outcomes) of the program will not be maintained (or realized)? This depends on (a) the likelihood that some changes may occur that are detrimental to maintaining or realizing the expected outcomes, and (b) the affect on the expected outcomes if some or all of these changes actually materialize?
17. Sustainability of the program This will depend on a number of factors, such as the continued legitimacy of the program, its financial stability, its continuity of effective management, and its ability to withstand changing market or other conditions. To what extent is there still a sufficient convergence or accommodation of interests among the major partners to sustain the program financially? To what extent has the program developed institutional capacity such as performance-based management, personnel policies, learning programs, and knowledge management that help to sustain a program? In what areas could the program improve in order to enhance its sustainability, such as better marketing of the program's achievements in order to sustain its reputation?
18. Prospects for continuation and strategies for devolution or exit To what extent should the program be sustained? Is the continuation of the program the best way of sustaining the results achieved? Should the design of the program be modified as a result of changed circumstances, either positive or negative? What other alternatives should be considered to sustain the program's results more cost-effectively, in the light of the previous evaluation findings with respect to relevance, efficacy, efficiency, and sustainability: • Reinventing the program with the same governance? • Phasing out the program? • Continuing country or local-level activities with or without devolution of implementation? • Seeking alternative financing arrangements, such as revenue-generation, or self-financing to reduce dependency on external sources? • "Spinning off" from the host organization?

Table A-3. Assessing the Bank's Performance as a Partner in the Program

Evaluation Questions
1. Comparative advantage at the global/regional level. To what extent is the Bank playing up to its comparative advantages at the global/regional level — its global mandate and reach and convening power? To what extent is the Bank's presence as a partner in the program catalyzing other resources and partners for the program?
2. Comparative advantage at the country level. To what extent is the Bank contributing multisector capacity, analytical expertise, and country-level knowledge to the program? To what extent has the Bank's country operations established linkages to the GRPP, where appropriate, to enhance the effectiveness of both?
3. Oversight. To what extent is the Bank exercising effective and independent oversight of its involvement in the program, as appropriate, whether the program is housed in the Bank or externally managed? To what extent is the Bank's oversight independent of the management of the program? To what extent does the Bank's representative on the governing body have a clear terms of reference?
4. Risks and risk management. To what extent have the risks associated with the program been identified and are being effectively managed? For example, IEG identified the following risks in its global review: • Bank bears a disproportionate share of responsibility for governing and managing in-house programs? • Confusion at the country level between global program activities, Bank activities, and Borrower activities? • Representation of NGOs and the commercial private sector on program governing bodies? • Unclear role and application of Bank's safeguards? • Trust-funded consultants and seconded staff representing the Bank on some program governing bodies?
5. Disengagement strategy. To what extent is the Bank engaged at the appropriate level in relation to the Bank's new strategic framework: • Watching brief? • Research and knowledge exchange? • Policy or advocacy network? • Operational platform? To what extent is the Bank facilitating an effective, flexible, and transparent disengagement strategy for the program, in relation to the Bank's objectives for its involvement in the program: • The program declares "mission accomplished" and closes? • The program continues and the Bank withdraws from all aspects of its participation? • The program continues and the Bank remains engaged, but the degree of the Bank's engagement in some or all aspects (such as financing) declines over time?

Table A-4. Common GRPP Activities

Policy and knowledge networking	
1. Facilitating communication among practitioners in the sector	This includes providing a central point of contact and communication among practitioners who are working the sector or area of development to facilitate the sharing of analytical results. It might also include the financing of case studies and comparative studies.
2. Generating and disseminating information and knowledge	This comprises two related activities. The first is gathering, analyzing and disseminating information, for example, on the evolving HIV/AIDS epidemic and responses to it, including epidemiological data collection and analysis, needs assessment, resource flows, and country readiness. The second is the systematic assembling and dissemination of knowledge (not merely information) with respect to best practices in a sector on a global/regional basis.
3. Improving donor coordination	This should be an active process, not just the side effect of other program activities. This may involve resolving difficult interagency issues in order to improve alignment and efficiency in delivering development assistance.
4. Advocacy	This comprises proactive interaction with policymakers and decision makers concerning approaches to development in a sector, commonly in the context of global, regional, or country-level forums. This is intended to create reform conditions in developing countries, as distinct from physical and institutional investments in public goods, and is more proactive than generating and disseminating information and knowledge.
5. Implementing conventions, rules, or formal and informal standards and norms	Rules are generally formal. Standards can be formal or informal, and binding or nonbinding, but implementing standards involves more than simply advocating an approach to development in a sector. In general, there should be some costs associated with noncompliance. Costs can come in many forms, including exposure to financial contagion, bad financial ratings by the IMF and other rating agencies, with consequent impacts on access to private finance; lack of access to OECD markets for failing to meet food safety standards, or even the consequences of failing to be seen as progressive in international circles.
Financing technical assistance	
6. Supporting national-level policy, institutional, and technical reforms	This is more directed to specific tasks than advocacy. This represents concrete involvement in specific and ongoing policy, institutional, and technical reform processes in a sector, from deciding on a reform strategy to implementation of new policies and regulations in a sector. It is more than just conducting studies unless the studies are strategic in nature and specific to the reform issue in question.
7. Capacity strengthening and training	This refers to strengthening the capacity of human resources through proactive training (in courses or on-the-job), as well as collaborative work with the active involvement of developing country partners.
8. Catalyzing public or private investments in the sector	This includes improving regulatory frameworks for private investment and implementing pilot investments projects.
Financing investments	
9. Financing country-level investments to deliver national public goods	This refers primarily to physical and institutional investments of the type found in Bank loans and credits (more than the financing of studies), the benefits of which accrue primarily at the national level.
10. Financing country-level investments to deliver global/regional public goods	This refers primarily to physical and institutional investments of the type found in Bank loans and credits (more than the financing of studies) to deliver public goods such as conserving biodiversity of global significance and reducing emissions of ozone-depleting substances and carbon dioxide, the benefits of which accrue globally.
11. Financing global/ regional investments to deliver global/regional public goods	This refers to financing research and development for new products and technologies. These are generally physical products or processes — the hardware as opposed to the software of development.

Annex B. Global Research Projects (Completed and Ongoing)

GRP	Year approved	Total cost ($ millions)	Duration (years)	No. country or thematic studies	Research outputs
Completed					
Explaining Growth	FY00	1.52	3	89	South Asian Experience with Growth (edited volume; 2003) Explaining Growth: A Global Research Project, (edited volume; 2003) Economic Prospects of the CIS: Sources of Long Term Growth (edited volume, 2004) Sources of Growth in Latin America: What is Missing? (edited volume, 2006) Explaining Growth in the Middle East (edited volume, 2007) Diversity in Economic Growth: Global Insights and Explanations (edited volume, expected 2009)
Understanding Reform: A Multidisciplinary Approach	FY01	1.74	3	42	Understanding Market Reforms Volume I: Philosophy, Politics and Stakeholders (edited volume, 2005) Understanding Market Reforms Volume Two: Motivation, Implementation and Sustainability (edited volume, 2006) Understanding Economic Reforms in Africa: A Tale of Seven Nations (edited volume, 2006) Understanding Market Reform In Latin America: Similar Reforms, Diverse Constituencies, Varied Results (edited volume, 2006) Economic Reform in Developing Countries: Reach, Range, Reason (edited volume, 2008)
Bridging Research and Policy	FY02	1.99		75 (includes very short episode studies)	Phase 1: 2001–03 Phase 2: 2003–05 Phase 3: 2006 Pilot BRP Initiative: 2007–08
Impact of Rich Countries' Policies on Poverty: Perspectives from the Developing World	FY04	1.46	3	23	Impact of Rich Countries' Policies on Poverty: Perspectives from the Developing World (edited volume expected 2009)

GRP	Year approved	Total cost ($ millions)	Duration (years)	No. country or thematic studies	Research outputs
Ongoing[1]					
Promoting Innovative Programs from the Developing World: Towards Realizing the Health MDGs in Africa and Asia	FY06	4.78	4	18	
Development on the Move: Measuring and Optimizing Migration's Economic and Social Impacts	FY07	1.78	3.5	7	
Varieties of Governance: Effective Public Service Delivery	FY08	0.11	3	TBD	
Climate Change	FY08	0.06		TBD	

1/. Two more GRPs on Urbanization and on Private Sector Development have been approved by the Board at the recent meeting in Kuwait and are now in the research proposal preparation or pilot study phase.

Annex C. 2007 External Evaluation: Recommendations and GDN Management Response

Recommendations	Management response & actions
OBJECTIVES AND REACH	
High Priority Clarify the extent to which GDN generally plans to focus on building capacity primarily in economics with other disciplines serving mostly as an instrument to answer questions of interest or building capacity broadly across s the social sciences.	**Under Implementation:** Researchers from all social science disciplines are encouraged to participate and this is clearly mentioned in calls for proposals to GDN's Awards and Medals Competition, RRCs and GRPs. Further discussion on this is planned as part of the strategic review.
Continue GDN's recent unofficial policy of encouraging the selection of themes in calls for papers that are more naturally interdisciplinary in subject supported by outreach outside of economics networks.	**Under Implementation:** Call for proposals encourage interdisciplinary contributions through for e.g, the awards competition which accepts submissions ín five different categoríes. This will continue to be a component in the future as well.
Low Priority Begin to develop measures of higher needs countries or even areas within countries within regions to track.	**Future Implementation**: This is subjected to Board approval, and will be implemented through RNPs
OUTCOMES, EFFECTIVENESS, RELEVANCE AND COST EFFECTIVENESSS, BY ACTIVITY	
PRCSs and GRPs: High Priority To disseminate GRPs' research findings to the broader policy and development community. To develop better delivery vehicles for RRCs, such as requiring policy briefs (accompanied by training to do so), for clarifying the policy relevance of papers from RRCs.	**Under Implementation:** Policy briefs, journal and volume publications, roundtable discussions are already undertaken to promote dissemination. Newer GRPs such as the migration one "Development on the Move" include workshops with policy-makers to be conducted in each country at the start and end of the study. More emphasis on outreach to policy-makers planned in the new communications strategy. Future Implementation: Inclusion of policy briefs is stressed at the moment, but this component will be strengthened in the coming RRCs.
Follow the findings of the "Workshop on Methodology for Comparative Analysis" to promoting a diversity of methodologies and research design through GRPs and other activities	**Under Implementation**: GDN migration GRP "Development on Move" incorporates a diversity of methodologies and research designs. An Interdisciplinary Research Methods workshop will be held in conjunction with the conference in Brisbane (2008). These will continue in the future.
RRCs and GRPs: Low Priority Consider holding some theme specific GRP workshops before or after a disciplinary conference to emphasize capacity building of attendees	Response: Will consider feasibility of the proposal.

Recommendations	Management response & actions
Consider individual-level training programs and GDNet self-training modules such as use of Internet resources as modules that accompany RRC workshops	**Under Implementation**: • Training sessions are conducted for building capacity of participating researchers in the latest GRPs (health and migration) and this practice will continue in the future. • Proposal writing toolkits are available on GDNet. • The newly developed skills-training-program to be launched in 200? in partnership with the RNPs will address this need.
Restructuring the entire process of GRPs theme selection to increase transparency and ranking of development contribution of the project	Under Implementation: Themes are debated and approved by board members representing different regions of the developing world. • Open calls for topic suggestions were held in the past (Impact project was selected in this manner); this practice will continue periodically in the future accompanied by specific guidelines/criteria for GRP topics that build on GDN's comparative advantage
Shortening the timelines and GRP project size	Under Implementation: Current GRPs operate on a reduced timeline and size: this will continue through the proposed Inter-Regional Research Projects as well.
Annual Conference: High Priority To be consistent with specific track themes across years to increase networking among clearer sets of audiences	**Response:** Themes are determined on basis of (1) issues of current global importance (2) relevance to developing countries 3) particular importance to region where conference is located in that year. **Future Implementation**: To increase networking and cross-fertilization across regions beyond the conference, thematic groups with dedicated, interactive spaces on GDNet will be created.
Explore publishing and distributing proceedings and papers in a post-conference CD (if possible, pre-conference) and on-line to extend the long- term value of the conference	**Under Implementation**: The following activities are already undertaken annually, • Special conference issue of biannual newsletter Research Monitor includes excerpts of speeches, key messages, notes on workshop abstracts, etc. • CD of conference papers distributed during the conference • Conference proceedings published with Edward Elgar • Papers are widely available: online through the main website and the GDN library • Conference intranet site developed for 2007/ 2008 conference.
Annual Conference: Low Priority Consider experimenting with alternative scheduling such as an 18 month schedule to allow secretariat and board to focus on additional priorities and activities, and also allow scheduling across regions.	**Under Consideration: Subject to Board approval.**
Consider additional consortia and participation in conferences aside from GDN's own and RNPs to promote networking	**Future Implementation:** To be incl. in responsibilities of GDN's key research staff; the maintenance of global calendar of development events will ensure focus on key of GDN importance.

Recommendations	Management response & actions
GDN can pair itself with a relevant academic conference and use surveys to compare the added value versus the ABCD conference.	**Response:** GDN conference and related workshops last for one week so it is not feasible to pair with another full conference. The ABCDE (later RBCDE) was held in conjunction with GDN's conference for 3 consecutive years • Also periodic surveys of conference participants are conducted to compare the added value of the conference to their career.
To pursue both capacity building and highest-quality knowledge building objectives for the conference, especially by increasing capacity building in at least selected sessions.	**Under Implementation:** The workshops held both pre-and post conference address this concern through intense one-on-one mentoring; in addition exposing GDN's grantees to internationally renowned speakers also acts as capacity building feature of GDN conferences. They also get feedback from the audience on their work presented during the conference.
GDNet: High Priority To make GDNet a portal for Southern researchers, leading working paper and database collections worldwide.	**Under Implementation**: • Site revamp focusing on incentives (access to online resources), networking, outreach and research comrnunications (promoting researchers profiles and work and collaborative working places (online project spaces) will underline the site revamp strategy and implementation • An aggressive marketing and outreach strategy together with a search optimization exercise will follow the new site launch to engage Southern Researchers in online networking activities • Review of current editorial and researchers' acceptance policy and processes • Continuous validation of current content and expanding sourcing effort in collaboration with regional window coordinators
Change grantee contracts to include GDNet as a central location for open access to datasets funded by GDN process.	**Under Consideration:** Contractual and technical changes can be easily accommodated However, there is often reluctance from the researchers to provide the datasets due to national legal constraints. Subject to availability, researchers' approval and legal clearance, the datasets will be made available online.
Continue to pursue ways to expand journal availability through GDNet considering the use of key stakeholders and board members to serve as liaisons.	**Response**: Negotiations with J-Stor have been revived to allow eligible researchers registered on the GDNet knowledgebase access to J-Stor Online Collection. Contractual arrangements are currently being finalized and technical gateway developed. Econ-Lit collection is currently being assessed for relevance and value. Feedback regarding recommendations for other online services from survey respondents and regional coordinators is compiled for assessment.
GDNet: Low Priority Setting up an international model program of data access from national institutions and aided by more senior researchers in the Global South.	**Response**: This will require further assessment and validation subject to available resources. It would also require a better understanding of other key players' efforts in this direction.

Recommendations	Management response & actions
GOVERNANCE, ORGANIZATION AND INTERACTION WITH REGIONAL PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS	
Governance (Board of Directors): High Priority	
To develop position requirements for members who have a greater experience in managing organizations or boards and financial background.	**Response:** Additional criteria for selection of representatives (such as previous managerial experience) will be presented to the Board for their consideration. Implementation is also constrained by the nominating organizations internal preferences and decisions.
Increase the interaction with board members by extending the days of board meetings and/or adding one or two virtual meetings per year via the Internet.	**Under Implementation:** Senior staff at GDN have frequent one-on-one interactions with board members for specific projects and issues. Additional ways and means of increasing interaction with board members will be explored, including virtual meetings.
Increase the number of permanent committees such as programmatic and development committees to handle the business issues.	**Under Implementation:** Program Committee exists. Additional committees or more extensive use of the Executive Committee to be considered by the Board.
Clarify for prospective incoming board members about the appropriate time expectations for board membership by frequently asked questions and using a nonbinding agreement about board member responsibilities.	**Future Implementation: Next fiscal year.**
Providing new board members a strong orientation to the organization within their first month on the board.	**Future Implementation:** Will be considered for newly appointed board members.
Work with nominating organizations to make recruitment of board members more transparent.	**Under Implementation:** Nominations are accepted through our Regional Network Partners and through boards of international associations represented on GDN; to our knowledge, calls for nominations are normally circulated among their members and a decentralized process is designed to ensure ownership and transparency. The need for transparency and wide consultation will be emphasized in the future.
Make sure the board has a conflict of interest policy signed at least once if not annually.	**Future Implementation: Next fiscal year.**
Governance (Board of Directors): Low Priority	
Consider an additional donor representative to help ground truth GDN's ideas from the perspective of funding.	**Future Implementation:** Proposal submitted to the Board for consideration.
Management Processes: High Priority	
To remain as non-hierarchical as possible and involve partners to feel ownership.	**Under Implementation:** Addressed in the recently completed Organizational Review.
GDN should hire a consultant to work with the organization to develop a coherent branding strategy and advise it regarding a communications plan.	**Future Implementation:** Lead Communications Officer position advertised; to be recruited by April 2008.
Management Processes: Low Priority	Under Implementation: Chief Economist has been recruited; provision of recruiting other researchers to be considered in early 2008.
Consider hiring a researcher if GDN wishes to focus more on providing intellectual direction to new activities and oversight for conference activities.	

Recommendations	Management response & actions
Consider hiring a fundraiser as a fulltime staff member or consultant based in the US or Europe.	Under Implementation: Discussed in the Strategic Review.
Engage more individuals to participate in planning processes.	Under Implementation: Junior staff members have been included in various sub-committees of GDN's management structure and in the recruitment panels.
Organizational Best Practice: High Priority To undertake a more complete external review of human resource policies.	Under Implementation: Human Resources consultant hired from October-December 2007 conducted a series of consultations and submitted a report on HR recommendation
Conduct a legal review of GDN's situation and options given its newly acquired international organization status in reference to liabilities, taxes, etc.	**Under Implementation:** Already conducted by GDN's Legal Counsel.
To formalize ways to how staff would handle problems with supervisors or top management.	**Under Implementation:** Conflict resolution and anti-harassment advisor appointed; recruitment of HR Manager/Administrator will also support this process.
Organizational Best Practice: Low Priority Establish clear and implemented policies on selection and supervision of family or friends.	**Future Implementation:** Will add to staff rules after new HR Manager comes on board.
Establish a policy on and training regarding sexual harassment.	**Under Implementation:** Anti-harassment advisor has been appointed already.
Review application of travel rules for consistency and cost effectiveness.	**Under Implementation:** The travel rules already exist and proper care is taken to cat, r to the requirements of the GDN staff keeping in mind the cost effectiveness.
Improve and more regularly update GDN's internal database to better maintain consistency of information across staff.	**Under Implementation:** Projects Assistant is responsible for updating information on internal databases
Undertake a market survey of similar organizations in India and internationally to check on comparability of local and international salary rates.	**Future Implementation**: Planned for April-May 2008 to ensure changes to be implemented by the next fiscal.
Examine the feasibility of adding at least a temporary additional local staff if the conference remains annual.	**Future Implementation:** This will be done for future conferences and has been done in the past, e.g. Beijing 2007.
GDN's Relationship with its RNPs: High Priority Clarify the extent to which GDN is a network of networks versus a centralized organization with networks as grantees.	**Under Implementation**: Clarity of goals and positioning, including relationships with RNPs were examined as part of the concurrent strategic review.
Widen the new pilot idea of working with RNPs in designing a coordinated fundraising plan toward a dedicated work plan with joint fundraising.	**Under Implementation:** GDN-ERF Memorandum of Understanding provides a mode1 that will be explored in other regions.
Provide greater institutional support for RNPs that rotate administrative centers to increase continuity during transitions.	**Under Implementation:** RNPs currently receive grants for overhead expenses, including secretariat relocation. A short period of RNP leadership overlap will be encouraged.

Recommendations	**Management response & actions**
Low Priority	
Look for partnerships and other ways to generate greater impact in the Asia region in building research capacity.	**Future Implementation:** This will be to some extent addressed through Inter-Regional Research Projects and sharing of mentors across regions.
Improve learning across regional networks through real or virtual meeting outside of the annual conference.	**Under Implementation**: Modalities to be discussed with RNPs for immediate implementation.
Augment input in decision-making process from RNPs on GRP themes or candidate selection.	**Under Implementation**: GDN's *Development on the Move* project incorporated inputs from RNPs in the first phase on selection of country study teams and mentors. New GRP proposals to be discussed with the RNPs.
Consider more detailed reporting to monitor the grant fund distribution to researchers (that include gender, discipline of training, whether the researcher is from high/low capacity area) and overhead costs (no specific examples of this)	**Under Implementation**: All RNPs submit annual reports on grant recipient profiles as well as the breakdown of direct & indirect costs. Grantees' profiles are captured in the internal database.
Consider adopting common reporting framework used by other donors.	**Response**: GDN's experiences suggest donors tend to use widely different reporting formats.

Annex D. Members of the Governing Bodies

Ernesto Zedillo (chair), Yale University and former President of Mexico

Isher Ahluwalia, Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (represents SANEI)

Mohammed Ariff, Malaysia Institute of Economic Research (represents EADN)

Ernest Aryeetey, Institute of Statistical, Social, and Economic Research, University of Ghana (represents AERC)

Abhijit Banerjee, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (represents the Bureau for Analysis of Research and Development)

Eliana Cardosa, Escola de Economia da Fundacao Getulio Vargas (represents LACEA)

Alan Gelb, World Bank (represents the World Bank)

Ravi Kanbur, Cornell University

Olav Kjorven, United Nations Development Program (represents UNDP)

Masanori Kondo, International Christian University in Japan (represents GDN Japan)

Mustapha Nabli, World Bank (represents the ERF)

Vijay Naidu, Victoria University of Wellington (represents ODN)

Pablo Andres Neumeyer, Universidad Torcuato di Tella (represents the International Economic Association)

Jean-Philippe Platteau, University of Namur (represents EUDN)

Vladimir Popov, New Economic School, Moscow (represents EERC)

Vincenzo Porcasi, University of Triests (represents the government of Italy)

Emma Porio, Ateneo de Manila University (represents the International Sociological Association)

James Robinson, Harvard University and Weatherhead Center for International Affairs

Lourdes Sola, University fo Sao Paulo (represents the International Political Science Association)

Boris Vujcic, Croatian National Bank and University of Zagreb (represents the CERGE-EI)

Annex E. Sources and Uses of Funds

Table E-1. Budget Expenses across GDN's Five Core Program Activities (US$ millions)

Program expenses	FY02[a]	FY03	FY04	FY05	FY06	FY07	FY08	Total
Regional research competitions	2.1	1.9	2.1	1.1	2.0	2.2	2.5	13.9
Global Research Projects	0.6	2.6	0.7	2.5	1.8	3.3	3.1	14.6
Global Development Awards	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.3	3.6
Annual Conference	1.4	2.1	1.6	1.2	1.0	1.2	1.2	9.7
GDNet	0.8	0.9	1.0	0.7	0.7	1.1	1.2	6.4
Total	5.5	8.2	6.0	6.0	6.0	8.2	8.3	48.2

Source: Annual financial audits.

a. From March 15, 2001 (inception) through June 30, 2002.

Table E-2. GDN: Donor Commitments by Activities, FY09 Accrual Basis (US$)

Donor/ activity	RRC	GRPs	AC	GDNet	Awards	IRPs	Strategic research and other projects	Secretariat	Total
ACBF				30,000					30,000
AFESD			1,300,000						1,300,000
Austria		335,000							335,000
AusAID	50,000	110,000	10,000					15,000	185,000
DFID				656,668			1,329,040	145,960	2,131.,668
Finland		310,650							310,650
France			131,601		15,000				146,601
Gates Foundation		1,266,843					1091,260	298,040	2,656,143
IDRC		297,225							297,225
Luxembourg		887,000			79,000			37,500	1,003,500
PHRD					190,000				190,000
Netherlands				668,690					668,690
Norway		90,000						12,500	102,500
NZAID							60,000		60,000
Spain		195,000			60,000			45,000	300,000
UNDP		579,500						30,500	610,000
World Bank	2,150,000	160,000	125,000	200,000	75,000	500,000	145,000	230,000	3,585,000
Total	2,200,000	4,231,218	1,566,601	1,555,358	419,000	500,000	2,625,300	814,500	13,911,977

Source: GDN documentation.

Note: Excludes $3,290,000 from 3ie for the activities and administrative costs of this program, which GDN hosts.

Table E-3. GDN Allocations to Regional Research Competitions (US$ thousands)

RRC	FY02	% of total	FY03	% of total	FY04	% of total	FY05	% of total	FY06	% of total	FY07	% of total	FY08	% of total
AERC	300	16%	300	17%	300	16%	225	23%	275	15%	320	16%	330	17%
EADN	275	14%	250	14%	250	13%	-	-	325	18%	260	13%	280	14%
EERC	250	13%	250	14%	250	13%	150	15%	225	13%	260	13%	260	13%
CERGE	250	13%	250	14%	250	13%	210	21%	225	13%	260	13%	280	14%
ERF	250	13%	250	14%	250	13%	100	10%	225	13%	260	13%	270	14%
LACEA	275	14%	200	11%	200	11%	125	13%	175	10%	220	11%	240	12%
SANEI	325	17%	300	17%	300	16%	125	13%	275	15%	320	16%	260	13%
OCEANIA	-	-	-	-	100	5%	50	5%	75	4%	100	5%	80	4%
Total	1,925		1,800		1,900		985		1,800		2,000		2,000	
% of GDN Revenue	23%		17%		22%		13%		27%		22%		21%	
GDN Revenue	8,460		10,880		8,550		7,450		6,750		9,260		9,620	
% of GDN Core Funds									49%		54%		56%	
Core Funds									3,660		3,670		3,570	

Source: GDN Secretariat.

Annex F. Persons Consulted

Person	Position
GDN Secretariat	
Gobind Nankani	President
George Mavrotas	Chief Economist
Ramona Angelescu,	Senior Political Scientist and program manager
Rajesh Grover	Controller
Sherine Ghoneim	Director, GDN Cairo
Savi Mull	Program Officer
Shilpa Phadke	Economist
Carol Best-Aaron	Coordinator, Washington Office
Lyn Squire	former President
GDN Board	
Isher Ahluwalia	Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations
Ernest Aryeetey	Institute of Statistical, Social, and Economic Research, University of Ghana
Olav Kjorven	United Nations Development Program
Pablo Andres Neumeyer	Universidad Torcuato di Te
Jean-Philippe Platteau	University of Namur
Ernesto Zedillo (chair)	Yale University and former President of Mexico
Carolina Hernandez (former)	Emeritus, University of the Philippines
Regional Network Partners	
Chalongphop Sussangkaru	EADN
Marcela Esclava	LACEA
Randy Filer	CERGE-EI
Heba Handoussa	ERF
William Lyakurwa	AERC
Donors	
Alan Winters	DFfID (also former World Bank representative on the GDN Board)
Abigail Mulhall	DFID
Rohinton Medhora	IDRC
Institute for Development Studies, University of Sussex	
Isabel Vogel	Program Manager, Strategic Learning Initiative
Overseas Development Institute (UK) and stakeholder meeting participants	
Simon Maxwell	ODI
John Young	ODI
Martin Prowse	ODI

Person	**Position**
Wayne Diamond	Oxfam
Luke Mukubra	DFID
World Bank	
Alan Gelb	DECVP and WB representative on GDN Board
Iver Cederholm	Senior Resource Management Officer, and WB TTL for GDN
Guillermo Perry	former WB representative on GDN board
Paul Hubbard	former Manager, DGF Secretariat
Independent Evaluator	
Marc D. Shapiro	MDS Associates

Annex G. Response of the Program to IEG's Global Program Review

April 2009

Introduction

The Global Program Review (GPR) of the Global Development Network (GDN) was undertaken by the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) of the World Bank in late 2008. The review assesses the relevance and effectiveness of GDN over its ten-year history and the Bank's performance as a major partner. In making this assessment, the review drew on the findings of the GDN Independent Evaluation conducted in 2007. GDN acknowledges and welcomes the thoughtful and valuable insights generated by the review.

The following section of this document presents the management response to the main findings and lessons learned. Section III captures the main areas in which strategic decisions have been and will be made on the basis of the current review's recommendations.

Management Response

SUMMARY PROGRAM REVIEW CONCLUSIONS

Key performance areas highlighted in the review include:

- Conceptually, GDN is well-designed for pursuing its objective. Its reach is global in scope, involving researchers and partner institutions from all regions of the world.
- GDN's rapid and successful institutional transformation. Established in 1999 as an internal unit of the World Bank, GDN is now an independent, international organization located in New Delhi, India. Throughout this transformation, GDN's main objectives and activities have remained constant.
- The relevance of GDN's overarching goal was high at the outset of the program and remains high today. Overall, GDN's relevance is moderately strong, its record of outputs is strong, and its achievement of program outcome objectives is moderate. This is in consonance with the findings of the 2007 Independent Evaluation.
- GDN's output record is strong in each of its five areas of activity, namely: Regional Research Competitions (RRCs), Global Research Projects (GRPs), the Global Development Awards and Medals (GDAM) competition and the Global Annual Development Conferences (GDAC).
- GDN has a notable history of external and internal evaluations in its relatively short existence.
- Overall, evaluations show some 'moderate evidence' of achievements in advancing two of GDN's three objectives — increased high-quality, policy-relevant research and enhanced research capacity — and (very) limited progress in advancing its third aim of informing policymaking (also stated in the 2007 Independent Evaluation).
- GDN has handled resource allocations, administrative costs, and financial management efficiently.

- GDN has improved its financial position in recent years by mobilizing larger and more diversified sources of funding, while some challenges persist.
- The World Bank has provided important financial and technical support to GDN since its founding. Yet, Bank performance, as a partner, in strategic direction and oversight of GDN is less than wholly adequate.

VALIDATION

The insights from the review will play a defining role in guiding GDN to sharpen and reaffirm priorities, going forward from ten years of its operational existence. The review puts GDN's activities in perspective in the achievement of its primary goal of generating, sharing, and applying to policy multidisciplinary knowledge for the purpose of development. Within this overarching goal, GDN appreciates the review's useful reminder of its three core program objectives:

- Generate high-quality, policy-relevant research in developing and transition countries
- Build research excellence and policy outreach capacity among researchers in those countries to improve the quality and expand the policy influence of their work on a national and international level;
- Promote greater linkages between researchers and the policy process to foster effective, evidence-based policy-making.

More importantly, the review raises valuable insights into:

- The need for GDN to develop its own explicit, state-of-the art systematic approaches for advancing each of its three program objectives and a corresponding log frame, focusing more on outcomes rather than outputs, especially on the policy front;
- The potential for expanding the relationship with the RNPs — explore areas of potential for effectiveness and efficiency gains through undertakings such cross-regional capacity building, standard setting and joint fundraising;
- The role of the World Bank in supporting global programs it has initiated, the duration of the support and the guidelines for continuation or withdrawal.

GDN's experience validates the review's observation on the role of the World Bank as a global partner. GDN agrees that the research community in developing and developed countries values GDN and praises the Bank's role in it. GDN recognizes the need for clearer guidelines for defining terms of engagement of the World Bank in global partnerships. GDN will welcome interest from the Bank in the form of a major engagement in securing its financial sustainability, and charting a clear and well-staggered exit strategy.

FACTUAL UPDATE

GDN would like to highlight information to the IEG for reasons of factual accuracy. Several developments since the Independent Evaluation was concluded in 2007 have not been adequately reflected in the current review. The following points merit clarifications on information provided in the report:

- *Relationship with the Regional Network Partners (RNPs):* As clarified in the GDN Strategic Review in 2008, while GDN is a 'network of networks', this is not its sole

role and the organization is much more than a network of networks. GDN works primarily in partnerships with the Regional Network Partners to support building research excellence and generating development knowledge at the country/regional level. GDN's partnership with the RNPs has involved strengthening both horizontal and vertical relationships and these remain a high priority for GDN. Bi-annual meetings are held with RNPs and involve their input into the larger research agenda in a peer driven and collegial manner. Through such meetings, GDN is able to engage in dialogues with RNPs and get valuable inputs without becoming too bureaucratic. However given the welcome differences across RNPs, GDN needs to work with other actors as well in support of its mission. The other complementary activities in GDN's portfolio, the Global Research Projects (GRPs), the Global Development Awards & Medals (GDAM) competition, the Annual Conferences and the Strategic Research Partnerships which facilitate cross-regional fertilization and networking among researchers contribute to achieving GDN's goals, with advice and input from the RNPs but not carried out directly by the RNPs in their respective regions. While GDN recognizes and validates the need to reinforce and continue to expand the relationships with RNPs, GDN also maintains direct contact with researchers and research institutions in the developing countries to allow for achieving the strategic objectives of building research excellence and shaping global policy debates.

- *Strengthening Institutional Capacity of RNPs:* In responding to variations in capacity and performance of different RNPs, especially the newer RNPs, GDN has commenced dialogues with two of the RNPs — the Oceania Development Network (ODN) and the South Asian Network of Economic (Research) Institutes (SANEI) to strengthen their own capacity as well as the global network. Both have rotating Secretariats and institutional strengthening involves facilitating smooth transition processes for efficient, seamless operations. Discussions with the two RNPs include frequent interactions with their Executive Committees and employing a Consultant to design ways forward to strengthen institutional capacity and governance for effective institutional arrangements compatible with furthering the mission of building research excellence in the regions.
- *Financial Sustainability in FY09:* Developments occurring in FY09 need to be reflected upon in terms of GDN's financial sustainability. GDN's dependence on funding from the World Bank has decreased. The funding from the Bank amounts to an estimated 25 percent of GDN's total revenue in FY09, down from 38 percent in FY07. The recently concluded fundraising strategy involves a capital campaign plan, to be drafted within the next year to target funding from developing country governments and High Net Worth Individuals (HNWIs), further enhancing GDN's financial position and sustainability, although the need for expanding the share of core versus project-based funding is clearly recognized.
- *Transition in Leadership:* The succession process in GDN will take place under the able leadership of the new President, Dr. Gerardo della Paolera, effective 15th August 2009. Prior to his taking office in August 2009, GDN has clear interim management processes in place for a smooth transfer and Dr. Paolera was appointed by the GDN Board before the previous president's departure. Dr. Paolera is known for his outstanding contribution in the past as the Founding President and Rector of the

Universidad Torcuato Di Tella (UTDT) in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and most recently at the American University of Paris, in both cases as President of these institutions as well as engaged in research. Both institutions grew phenomenally under his leadership. At present he is a Visiting Professor at the Central European University in Budapest and also a Visiting Fellow at the Paris School of Economics (PSE). He has a PhD in Economics from the University of Chicago, with a specialization in economic history.

- *Outreach and Knowledge Sharing:* Besides playing an integral strategic role in generating and applying knowledge for development, GDN plays a significant role in sharing knowledge as well. GDN emphasizes that while the aspect of sharing has been discussed favourably, it has been addressed at the program level. In crystallizing the Strategic Objectives of GDN, a primary objective is to expand outreach of world class research to other researchers and to policy makers; to inform and shape policy debates in regional and global forums on selected topics, and to encourage policy makers' exchange of ideas on selected issues. This is coupled with an effort to increase visibility with the objective of becoming a well known, reputable point of contact for reaching out to developing country policy makers and researchers.
- *Shaping Policy Debates:* GDN underscores the expansion of its activities that fit well with its objectives outlined above. Recent activities have emphasized dissemination of policy research and engagement with policy makers. For instance, GDN is working on a newly funded project by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation on 'Shaping Agricultural and Trade Policies in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia: Promoting Evidence Informed Policies'. GDN is also in the process of hiring several policy outreach staff and systematically requiring the production of policy briefs from completed research projects.
- *3ie*: GDN would like to clarify that the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie) is a program within GDN titled GDN's International Impact Evaluation Department.

Lessons Learned & Action Items

The review mentions lessons learned and GDN has carefully examined and considered the valuable recommendations made by the review and earmarked action items to incorporate them.

Lessons Learned	Action Items
Effectiveness depends on a theory of change and strategies for outcome objectives	GDN's recent strategic planning process has involved the assessment of the effectiveness of its activities in achieving its strategic objectives and defining the theory of change. In doing so, GDN is developing a logical framework that would measure outcomes against the three core program objectives. The development of an evaluation design subsuming the logical framework will provide the basis for better preparation for the next Independent Evaluation of GDN.

Lessons Learned	Action Items
Global networks require well-defined roles and responsibilities for their constituent parts	GDN is deepening partnerships with RNPs, reinforcing their role by empowering them with increased voice. GDN recognizes the value of intensive engagement with the RNPs and has augmented the relationship through bi-annual meetings, joint inter-regional research projects and a regional training program, the latter two being RNP driven. GDN will continue intensifying the relationships with RNPs.
It is difficult to design and implement a coherent global program without a level of core funding sufficient to allow for the implementation of results based strategies and the coordination of activities in support of those activities	GDN acknowledges the challenge of resource mobilization given the current world scenario and intends to broaden the scope for additional resource mobilization, particularly core funding. GDN had recently employed fundraising consultants to assess ways to increase financial stability and income sustainability, raising extra unrestricted funds for core activities and exploring the feasibility of an endowment fund. Results of the fundraising analysis indicate that GDN should embark on a capital campaign, the plan for which will be drafted and presented to the Board of Directors for approval. GDN will continue to target core funding outside of the World Bank.
There are weaknesses in a governance arrangement in which the governing board is responsible for program agenda-setting as well as strategic direction and oversight	The overarching, high-level strategic direction will now be provided by the GDN Assembly. The GDN Board has a clear role in strategic oversight and the RNPs will continue to be consulted with regularly (bi-annually) for program agenda-setting which is a mechanism that is working well.

Other action items include:

- GDNet: The GDN Strategic Review focused on GDN's role in *shaping policy debates* rather than attempting to *influence/inform policy debates.* The GDNet strategy for 2010–2015 will be developed in light of: a) the GDN overall strategic direction; b) the GDNet goal towards communication of research knowledge generated in developing and transition countries; c) guided by the evaluation suggestion to develop a strong theory of change about how this can be implemented, d) and taking advantage of changing technologies. The GDNet strategy for 2010–2015 will involve strengthening regional ownership and working with RNPs to collectively develop institutional capacity for policy outreach.

- GDAMCs: In order to document information on the outcomes of the awards and medals in terms of outputs and policy outreach, GDN will commission an evaluation of the Awards and Medals Competition in 2009. The evaluation will assess the outcomes of the research awards, the medals and effectiveness of the competition towards policy outreach and career advancement of awardees.

The Global Program Review Series

The following reviews are available from IEG.

Volume #1,	Issue #1:	ProVention Consortium
	Issue #2:	Medicines for Malaria Venture
	Issue #3:	Development Gateway Foundation
	Issue #4:	Cities Alliance
Volume #2,	Issue #1:	Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
	Issue #2:	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
	Issue #3:	Population and Reproductive Health Capacity Building Program
	Issue #4:	International Land Coalition
Volume #3,	Issue #1:	Consultative Group to Assist the Poor
	Issue #2:	Global Development Network

GPR

The **Global Development Network (GDN)** was launched in December 1999 as global program with its Secretariat in the World Bank. GDN is now an independent international organization with its headquarters in New Delhi, India. From the outset, GDN's program objectives have been to generate policy-relevant development research from within developing and transitional countries, to build the research and policy outreach capacities of researchers in those countries, and to promote the use of research in policy-making processes. To achieve these objectives, GDN has sponsored five core activities: (1) regional research competitions, (2) global research projects, (3) an annual conference, (4) a Global Development Awards and Medal Competition, and (5) GDNet—a Web-based source of knowledge, information, and services. A 2007 external evaluation concluded that GDN had provided relevant services that showed evidence of research capacity built and knowledge generated, along with limited evidence of enhanced outreach to policy makers. IEG's Global Program Review has also found GDN's program objectives to be relevant, but progress on advancing these objectives to be more modest. This modest record reflects the lack of explicit, state-of-the-art strategies that incorporate GDN's various activities into systematic approaches for advancing its objectives. In addition, GDN had not fully developed effective working relations with its 11 constituent regional network partners—an issue acknowledged by GDN as a priority in its own 2008 strategic review.

IEG
Independent Evaluation Group