**POLICY ACTORS AS USERS AND PRODUCERS OF EVIDENCE**

Module Outline

Institute of Development Studies (IDS), University of Ibadan, University of Ilorin

*2nd-4th May 2018*

Research forms the basis for programme and policy development, but for it to do so, it is key that research and evidence should not only reach policy actors, but also be used effectively by them to inform policy programmes and policy decisions. In other words, for the fight against poverty to be successful around the world, a sound evidence base and policy practice must work together effectively. Good policy-making requires answers to the questions — what works, what does not, and why? These answers are produced through rigorous research, most often by academics and scholars working in universities and research centres around the world. These two worlds are set very far apart from each other – both in terms of literal distance at times, and in terms of their foundational orientation. Relevant research is often produced by centres in other countries and within contexts different from the ones where interested policy actors work and produced in professional milieus that have different sets of priorities and agendas. This means that there is often a disconnect between those who create the evidence base and those who are positioned to implement the research findings. But increasingly researchers, policymakers and implementers are working more closely together. Much of this depends, however, on the extent to which each is able to understand the work of the other.

This module seeks to reduce the gap between policy actors and researchers in order to contribute to making policy more evidence-based. This requires policy audiences to be able to: identify and build relations with relevant research communities; identify and access evidence from a wide range of sources and contexts; assess its rigour and credibility; interpret this evidence to the given context and applying it to policy decisions; and shape research agendas to create a body of relevant evidence. A central task for the policy actor within all this is to define problems, and ask the right questions, so that the larger body of evidence can be contextualised to produce knowledge that is applicable outside the original research setting.

This module aims to strengthen skills in the following areas:

* Define clear problems and ask the right questions, keeping in mind context specificity and gender awareness.
* Identify and access evidence and existing social science research from an expanded set of contexts and sources, filtering for quality and relevance.
* Critically assess the rigour and credibility of evidence.
* Interpret and apply this evidence to policy decisions.
* Build relations with the research community and play a role in generating high quality research.

At the end of the module, participants should be able to:

1. Source and locate relevant research, and filter research to decide what is most useful for their work;
2. Strategically recognise the usefulness and value of different types of research, and connect research with policymaking and implementation;
3. Evaluate the quality and credibility of research studies and existing evidence, based on their basic components, namely framing questions, methodology, rigour and validity of findings;
4. Contribute to informed policy debates, and communicate contextualised research findings from a variety of sources to subordinates, peers and superiors in a gender aware manner;
5. Identify evidence gaps and generate demand for new research, especially with regard to the impact of policy on women.

**Mode of Delivery**

We are aware that participants from policy arenas have heavy work burdens in their respective fields and their time is scarce. The module is, therefore, designed to require minimal preparation. It is built around practical exercises and hands-on learning during sessions in which participants work on issues and challenges relevant to their work. These exercises are based on some of the main policy issues of interest in Nigeria. We propose to draw case studies from the following thematic areas: (i) access to and quality of social service delivery, namely health; (ii) issues of good governance and accountability, including citizen involvement; and (iii) security and crime/violence prevention.

The module is delivered over 3 days through five units (A-E) that build incrementally and gradually on one another. There are four sessions per day. Each session is delivered through a combination of facilitated discussions, group-based exercises, and plenary presentations (see table below). The module ends with an agreed framework for continued networking and interaction among participants, such as, for example, seminars with prominent researchers – that allow participants to maintain contact with each other and explore with others strategies for accessing and using research.

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|  | **MORNING** | **AFTERNOON** |
| **DAY**  **1** | ***Unit A: Mapping Connections between Policy and Research*** | ***Unit B: Identifying Evidence*** |
| **A1.** Situating policy actors and researchers within the policy process | **B1.** Searching for research across contexts and fields |
| **A2.** Arenas for engagement | **B2.** Identifying arguments |
|  |  |  |
| **DAY**  **2** | ***Unit C: Assessing Evidence*** | |
| **C1.** Relevant Evidence: types of studies | **C3.** Rigorous Evidence: research methodologies |
| **C2.** Credible Evidence: argumentation | **C4.** Robust Evidence: causality and policy impact |
|  |  |  |
| **DAY**  **3** | ***Unit D: Interpreting Evidence*** | ***Unit E: Commissioning Research*** |
| **D1.** Spin, biases, and fallacies | **E1.** Drafting Terms of Reference |
| **D2.** Utilising and contextualising evidence | **E2.** Evaluating Terms of Reference |

**DAY 1**

Day 1 has two units. The first unit focuses on interactions between the research and policy worlds, starting by situating different actors within the process of generating evidence-based policy, in order to identify gaps and disconnects that exist between researchers and policy actors. The unit is aimed at identifying arenas of engagement and collaboration between the research community and policy actors, and the possibility of policy actors supporting the production of high quality research, for example, through the generation of demand. The second unit is focused on the nature of evidence. Here participants identify which kinds of evidence they need from a wide range of sources and contexts, how to access existing evidence, and how to quickly identify the main argument of key studies.

**09.15 – 9.30 Introduction to the Module**

*Objectives*

Provide participants an overview of the module, its aims, content, and structure. Allow group to know strengths, weaknesses, and expectations of each participant.

*Content*

Taking turns, participants and instructors introduce themselves by telling the group how they use evidence in their everyday work, and what are their expectations from this module. The instructors introduce the module and, together with the participants, set the ground rules.

*Format*

Individual presentations of participants and their research; presentation of the module.

***Unit A: Mapping Connections between Policy and Research***

**9.30 – 11.00** **Situating policy actors and researchers within the policy process (A1)**

*Main facilitator: Fatai Aremu*

*Session objectives*

The objective of this session is to allow participants to clearly see the linkage between research and policy process and to also unpack the reasons for the gaps between researchers and policy actors. At the end of the session, participants will have a better understanding of the factors that account for the weak link between the two communities and how each is better situated in the process of producing evidence-based policy.

*Content*

We start this session with a plenary discussion, where participants examine the causes of the weak connections between researchers and policy actors by drawing on their respective experiences. In doing so, the session will focus centrally on how researchers and policy actors perceive each other and how these (mis)perceptions affect research-policy engagement. There is a general tendency for policy actors to think of academic research as not relevant to policy processes, as meant for a very specific audience, and as informed by an “agenda”. The session will demonstrate the close connection with policy through the use of popular case studies of how academic research came to influence policy in the areas of HIV, nutrition, climate change and public service provision.

*Reading*

Broadbent, E. 2012. *Politics of Research-based Evidence in African Policy Debates: Synthesis of Case Study Findings*. London: Overseas Development Institute.

**11.00 – 11.15 Tea Break**

**11.15 – 13.00 Arenas for engagement (A2)**

*Main facilitator: Fatai Aremu*

*Session objectives*

The objective of this session is to enable participants to recognise arenas for engagement and synergy between researchers and policy actors. At the end of the session, recognise arenas for convergence between producers of scientific evidence and the users.

*Content*

This session focuses on the policy process and its multiple levels and arenas. In Africa, these levels and arenas are not just intricate; they exercise varying degrees of power on the policy process. In sector-specific groups, participants will explore the different research needs of each of these arenas. Different platforms exist for engagement in the policy process with varying degrees of potential for desired uptake and outcomes. Participants will be encouraged to identify strategic arenas for optimal research engagement depending on the issue area and policy context.

*Reading*

McCluskey, R. and Nalukwago Isingoma, M. 2017. ICTD Partnerships with African Revenue Authorities: Collaborating for Impactful Research, *ICTD Summary Brief* No. 8, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies.

**13.00 – 14.00 Lunch Break**

***Unit B: Identifying Evidence***

**14.00 – 15.15** **Searching for research across contexts and fields (B1)**

*Main facilitator: Ayobami Ojebode*

*Session objectives*

The objective of this session is to enable participants to gain the skills of searching for research in different contexts and fields. At the end of the session, participants will be able to identify sources of good research that are relevant to their policy interests.

*Content*

This session has four brief parts: where to search, how to search, how to filter, and the need for gender inclusiveness in searching.

*Where to search*: This session begins with a survey of the different sources of research publications: journals, books, books of readings and the differences among them. It then proceeds to a discussion of the variations in the strengths of different sources – types of journals (standard vs predatory ones).

*How to search:* Since this is an applied session, there are a number of activities to be performed. Participants will use search tools to identify easily accessible sources of quality data in their respective policy areas.

*How to filter*: We will discuss how to filter these for quality and credibility. Participants will discuss technical rating of research quality, including journal ratings and citation scores. Participants will work in sector-specific working groups in this hands-on session to find a variety of credible sources of evidence that are relevant to their particular policy arena.

*Need to be inclusive:* The session will also deal with the need to be gender-sensitive in the search for literature. In searching for research, therefore, or in constituting a team to search for research, it is important to be sensitive to how one’s gender might colour what one finds and make deliberate efforts to guard against this problem of selective perception. This point will be made and discussed by participants.

*Reading*

Mutiis A. and Kitchen, S. 2017. African Digital Research Repositories: Survey Report. Available at: https://www.internationalafricaninstitute.org/.../AfricanDigitalResearchrepositories.pdf

**15.15 – 15.30 Tea Break**

**15.30 – 17.00** **Identifying arguments (B2)**

*Main facilitator: Miguel Loureiro*

*Session objectives*

The objective of this session is to enable participants to quickly identify the main argument in key studies, in order to allow a practice of quick engagement with a large body of evidence. At the end of this session, participants will be well versed in identifying the key elements of an article or report, including its argument and underlying assumptions.

*Content*

This session is divided into two parts: in the first part, participants will work with some techniques for speed reading (skimming, scanning, previewing, and note taking) to help them identify and synthesise arguments quickly. In the second part, participants unpack the essential features of an argument through a series of short exercises (on propositions, premises, assumptions, and conclusions), to better identify validity in different kinds of arguments, namely inductive and deductive arguments.

*PART I - Previewing*

Previewing is the first step in critical reading. It is a useful technique to sieve through large amounts of information to decide which ones are worth reading further or not. By glancing over the article or report without reading it thoroughly, we will train participants to look for clues regarding the issue addressed on the piece, its argument, and what are its main points. We will use Mueller and Oppenheimer’s article ‘The Pen Is Mightier than the Keyboard’ (see below *Suggested reading*) to train participants in previewing and skimming/scanning techniques. First, individually, participants will be given 5 minutes to highlight the key critical components of the article - namely its argument, evidence, and implications. We then proceed to a group discussion where together participants and facilitators identify the main elements they used to find the argument, supporting evidence and implications, namely key words, structural hints, topic sentences, and sequential markers. We end this part of the session by highlighting what, how, and when to read the different parts of an article or report as well as which questions to ask while reading - Why am I reading this? What do I already know? What do I want to know? - in order to quickly find its argument, evidence, and implications (the ‘*so what?*’).

*PART II - Identifying and analysing arguments*

An argument is an intellectual process where someone is not just asserting their views, but also giving some kind of reason for them. In other words, an argument is a reason or set of reasons given in support of an idea, action or theory. In the second part of this session we will unpack the concept of argument into its key elements, namely claim (or conclusion), warrant (or reason why the claim is made), and evidence (supporting the claim), in order to better understand it. We will start with a short lecture explaining the different elements of an argument, followed by a set of exercises where participants in small groups read through a series of sentences to identify which ones are arguments and which ones are not. We will then continue with another short lecture on the different kinds of arguments, namely inductive and deductive, as well as on the different purposes of arguments, namely to explain and/or justify or to persuade audiences. The aim of this mini-lecture is to prepare the participants for a final exercise where - again in small groups - they identify underlying assumptions (the facts, beliefs, or ideas not explicitly stated, but underlying the argument). We will end the session with a recap of how to find the argument, evidence, and implications of an article or report.

*Reading*

Mueller, P. and Oppenheimer, D. 2014. The Pen Is Mightier than the Keyboard: Advantages of longhand over laptop note taking. *Psychological Science* 25(6): 1159–1168.

**DAY 2**

Day 2 consists of a single unit that is focused on policy actors’ role as users of evidence. Here participants hone their skills in identifying what constitutes (a) relevant, (b) credible, (c) robust, and (d) rigorous evidence. The four sessions of Day 2 are built around each of these four skills. First, participants will assess if research evidence is relevant to their needs by looking at different types of existing studies. They will then move on to assessing the credibility of research evidence by distinguishing between sources and gauging the strength of claims and arguments. Third, participants will measure how robust the evidence is, by analysing the strength of the causal argument and the suggested policy impact. Finally, participants will assess the rigour of the evidence by looking at the methodologies used in the research and matching these to claims.

***Unit C: Assessing Evidence***

**9.00 – 11.00** **Relevant Evidence: types of studies (C1)**

*Main facilitator: Ayobami Ojebode*

*Session objectives*

At the end of this session, participants should be able to identify and discuss the different types of studies and how to apply each type in policy formulation. It will emphasise the need to understand the kind of findings that each is capable of producing, and the danger is interpreting one (such as correlative research) as if it were another (such as causal research). This distinction is based on the purpose or goals of research

*Content*

The first part of this session will deal with an overview of different types of studies.

*Descriptive studies:* These aim at describing what a situation is. Prevalence studies of diseases, for instance, are descriptive. Subtypes of descriptive studies (such as historical studies, prevalence surveys, audience studies, and opinion polls) will be discussed.

*Correlative studies:* These attempt to examine trends and relationships between two factors without making a causal claim between the two.

*Causal studies*: These attempt to establish that one factor is the cause or the outcome of another or map out the pathway by which one factor produces another. Different designs of causal studies will be discussed. These include experimental designs, quasi-experimental designs, and causal case studies.

*Proprietary studies*: these are studies commissioned by commercial organisations or agencies and are often for restricted circulation.

*Academic studies*: are usually for free circulation and are primarily meant to build knowledge.

*Grey literature:* is produced by non-governmental agencies, advocacy groups and similar bodies.

The second part of this session will address sources of research: from independent academic scholars, institution-based academic scholars, think-tank researchers, and consultants. Implications of the source of research for adapting research for policy will involve participants – in small groups – mapping out the role and usefulness of different types of research evidence in their respective policy areas. Participants' preferences for particular types and sources of research will help guide the discussion, but we will build on these to provide a more comprehensive list of credible forms and sources. The session will use and compare samples from different sources to allow participants to discuss the relative advantage of each type with particular emphasis on their respective policy focal areas.

Participants will map the role and usefulness of different types of research evidence in their respective policy areas. Participants' preferences for particular types and sources of research will help guide the discussion, but we will build on these to provide a more comprehensive list of credible forms and sources. The session will use and compare samples from different sources to allow participants to discuss the relative advantage of each type with particular emphasis on their respective policy focal areas.

*Reading*

Eidlin, F. 2011. The Method of Problems versus the Method of Topics. *Political Science*, 44(4): 758-761.

**11.00 – 11.15 Tea Break**

**11.15 – 13.00 Credible Evidence: argumentation (C2)**

*Main facilitator: Miguel Loureiro*

*Session objectives*

We continue on the theme of assessing the credibility of evidence in this session by focusing on building participants’ skills to judge the credibility of arguments made with research evidence. We aim to train participants on gauging the strength of claims and arguments in academic articles and policy reports, as well as to know why the need for peer-review process in research.

*Content*

Arguments are based on reasons that support a claim or conclusion; but they are also based on theories, beliefs, and assumptions (premises). When the underlying assumptions are incorrect, the argument is based on a false premise. We start this session with an exercise where participants individually identify if a set of arguments we give them are based on sound or false premises. We then ask participants to get together in small groups and agree on the strength of the claims made in each argument and their supporting premises. This allows us not only to improve their skills on differentiating between strong, good arguments and weak or bad arguments, but also to show them why we have (and need) a peer-review process in academia.

A basic premise of argumentation theory is the acknowledgement that we often produce biased arguments if we only take our perspective/viewpoint and that is why we need to engage with others, so we can see all different viewpoints and therefore create a stronger argument. This is why in academia we need a peer-review process to make our research and argumentation credible. By asking participants to first individually identify false and true premises and then group them, we are also nudging participants to engage with each other (and their different viewpoints) to - together - make better choices on identifying strong and credible arguments.

We then proceed to identify what are necessary and/or sufficient conditions. In policy-oriented research - and in much of social sciences research - two key elements to explain what triggers events or practices are ‘context’ and ‘conditionalities’. Often, we see that it is very hard to say if some event, practice or policy works elsewhere. “It depends…” tends to be the common (and infuriating at times) answer. As Jane Mansbridge’s article (see below *Suggested reading*) shows, policymakers need to know *what* does it depend on, namely what is the context and what are the conditions which are necessary and/or sufficient for a certain event to happen (or policy to succeed). We conclude this session with a group exercise to help participants identify the difference between necessary conditions (conditions that must be present for an event to occur) and sufficient conditions (conditions that will produce the event), and how they interact. This will also build participants’ knowledge to better grasp the session on robust evidence (on causality and policy impact) in the afternoon, as well as the session on utilising and contextualising evidence the following day.

*Reading*

Mansbridge, J. 1999. Should blacks represent blacks and women represent women? A contingent ‘yes’. *The Journal of Politics* 61(3): 628-657.

**13.00 – 14.00 Lunch Break**

**14.00 – 15.15 Rigorous Evidence: research methodologies (C3)**

*Main facilitator: Ayobami Ojebode*

*Session objectives*

The aim of this session is to equip participants with the skills needed to distinguish research in terms of their purpose and goals. Participants will, in addition, be able to assess how well the methods of a research match its goals and purposes.

*Content*

The session will be delivered in three parts: the basic research traditions and their differences; the basic research procedure and steps; and likely sources of bias and errors in research designs. Each part starts with a short lecture followed by a small interactive Q&A where participants and facilitators share their previous experiences with the different research methodologies.

*Basic research traditions*: these are quantitative and qualitative research traditions. While trying to stay away from the long disagreements between this, the session will summarise the nature of each and the differences between them.

*Research procedure*: in this section, we will discuss a summary of the steps from ideation to completion of the research process: conception, articulation of the research question, literature review, methodological decisions, data collection, data analysis, write up and presentation. The overlapping and reiterative nature of this process will be emphasised.

*Likely sources of bias and errors:* the likely sources of bias and errors to be discussed will be theory and literature search, sampling, case selection, and data interpretation.

*Reading*

Ojebode, A., Onyishi, I.E. and Aremu, F. 2017. Is Election a Disadvantage? Nigerian Local Councils and Security Provision, *IDS Bulletin* 48(2): 31-52.

**15.15 – 15.30 Tea Break**

**15.30 – 17.00 Robust Evidence: causality and policy impact (C4)**

*Main facilitator: Fatai Aremu*

*Session objectives*

Solving societal problems is the goal of policy and identifying ways of solving those problems is the purpose of research. Problems are solvable only to the extent that their ‘true’ causes are clearly identified. This session will enable participants to improve their understanding of what a ‘cause’ is and what it is not. At the end of the session, participants will be able to decipher various types of causes, causal models and implications of causality for policy uptake and impact.

*Content*

In this session, participants will receive a quick overview of the concept of causality, and how causal models are designed to connect causes (interventions) to eventual effect (impact). Social science research can be separated between descriptive research that seeks to provide details of a phenomenon, and causal research that aims to explain why that phenomenon occurs. Research that deals with social problems usually attempts to establish some type of causality, and policy focused research seeks to intervene on causal relations to, ideally, solve social problems and produce better social outcomes. Assessing the design of research projects, therefore, is central to understanding whether or not they can provide evidence on causal linkages.

*Reading*

Htun, M., and Weldon S.C. 2010. When do Governments Promote Women’s Rights? A comparative framework for analysis of sex equality policies, *Perspectives in politics* 8(1): 207-216.

**DAY 3**

Day 3 has two units. The first continues the focus on policy actors as users of evidence, while the second unit shifts the focus to their role as producers of evidence. In the first unit, participants will strengthen their analytical skills to interpret evidence, learning how to detect bias, fallacies and political spin, and strategising how to utilise and apply evidence to policy decisions. In the second unit, participants will engage with their potential role in shaping research agendas, enhancing their ability to draft terms of reference to commission new research evidence when there is none, as well as evaluate research proposals in terms of quality, relevance and rigorous. Here, they will be asked to design their own TOR, possibly including the design of a commissioned study.

***Unit D: Interpreting Evidence***

**9.00 – 11.00 Detecting spin, biases, and fallacies (D1)**

*Main facilitator: Miguel Loureiro*

*Session objectives*

In this session, participants are made aware of errors in reasoning that result in misunderstanding arguments and why they happen. At the end of this session, they will be better equipped to detect cognitive biases, heuristics, and logical fallacies that hinder policymaking processes.

*Content*

According to Nobel prize winner Daniel Kahneman (2011), we use two systems of thinking for decision-making: through one of them - what he calls System 1 - we think fast using our instincts, and through the other - what he calls System 2 - we think slowly using logic and deliberation. What he and many other social psychologists and behavioural economists have proven since his first discovery in 1979, is that we suffer from a series of inherited human cognitive bias, heuristics, and logical fallacies that make us often use System 1 rather than System 2. By cognitive biases we mean predictable patterns of thought and behaviour that lead us to draw incorrect conclusions, by heuristics mental shortcuts we use to solve common problems, and by logical fallacies arguments in our mind where we reach a conclusion without all the facts.

Recently, Jonathan Haidt (2001) developed a model to explain these patterns (what he calls the Social Intuitionist model), where he states that when we analyse events (or arguments), our intuitions come first, and reasoning is produced after a judgement is made (based on our intuitions). In other words, our intuitions (Kahneman’s System 1) affect our reasoning (System 2). This also makes us perceive meaning rather than randomness and infer cause rather than coincidence to many events in our lives, as our minds are built to detect meanings in patterns, infer causal relationships from coincidences, and believe earlier events cause later ones (Chabris and Simons 2010). It is crucial then that we are aware of these biases, heuristics, and fallacies, accept them, and think accordingly. We need to find techniques to eliminate them while making decisions, in this case, while detecting the validity of an argument and its corroborating evidence.

The first part of this session comprises of a short lecture on cognitive biases, heuristics, and logical fallacies and how to detect them, followed by a series of group exercises where participants identify a set of cognitive bias most common in policymaking (confirmation bias, consistency bias, and groupthink), as well as heuristics (anchoring effect and affect heuristics), and logical fallacies (composition/division, anecdotal evidence, and cherry picking). We end the first part with a discussion on gender biases and how they effect policy. In the second part of this session, we focus on numerical data and statistics, with a group exercise to train participants on how to spot misleading data in tables and charts, and end with a discussion challenging the notion that numbers are facts and that they exist in nature, while in reality they are not and are socially constructed (Best 2008).

*Reading*

Cook, J. and Lewandowsky, S. 2011. *The Debunking Handbook*. St. Lucia: University of Queensland.

**11.00 – 11.15 Tea Break**

**11.15 – 13.00 Utilising and contextualising evidence (D2)**

*Main facilitator: Ayobami Ojebode/Fatai Aremu*

*Session objectives*

At this stage, participants will build on their understanding of evidence by identifying how evidence is utilised and contextualised in the respective policy domains. They will be supported to pinpoint which form of evidence could be utilised and how they will adapt and adopt the evidence to fit the need of the policy process.

*Content*

The focus of this session is on contextualising evidence. In the first part, we pay attention to the concept of context (and contextomy). We identified different kinds of contexts: religious, social, academic, topical, political contexts and how these may condition the findings of a research.

We focus the second part on the need to be context-sensitive when adapting research reports for policy. It will also deal with the problem of up-scaling development interventions or projects. Many attempts to up-scale development projects in Africa fail because the attempts ignore differences in contexts.

*Reading*

Newman, K. et al 2013. *What is the evidence on evidence-informed policy making?* INASP. http://www.inasp.info/uploads/filer\_public/2013/04/22/what\_is\_the\_evidence\_on\_eipm.pdf

**13.00 – 14.00 Lunch Break**

***Unit E: Commissioning Research***

**14.00 – 15.15 Drafting Terms of Reference (E1)**

*Main facilitator: Miguel Loureiro*

*Session objectives*

By now participants should be able to find, read, interpret and contextualise work. This session will put these skills to test by having participants work in their sector-specific groups to write Terms of Reference (ToR) to commission a new piece of research or a new project.

*Content*

Before drafting any kind of Terms of Reference (ToR) we need to ask ourselves what do we *really* want to know about a certain issue (for instance, if dealing with social protection, do we want to know more about cash transfers or redistributive systems?). *Clarity* is an essential element to drafting ToRs, which we can get by answering a series of questions beforehand, such as, why do we need research? How clear are we on the problem/issue we are trying to solve? Do we have a research question to be answered and how specific is it? Answering these questions help us to clarify the purpose of the ToR. It is also important to know how much we want/need to find out, and therefore the *scope* of the study. It helps to imagine ourselves in a spectrum of knowledge, where in one corner we know what we want, and in the other corner we do not know what we want.

Depending on where we are in the spectrum we will either need some kind of input-based ToR (where we specifically know what we want and therefore need evidence and/or validation) or output-based ToR (where we broadly know what we want are therefore are open to suggestions). Within this spectrum we are therefore either asking for some sort of consultancy, or commissioned study, or open research. Each kind of study will require a research question (from very specific to more generic), a methodology to answer that question (which we either specify, suggest, or leave it to the researcher), a different team of experts (from surveyors to applied researchers), and therefore carrying different costs.

Once we have clarity and know the scope of the study, we need to communicate what we want, which we do through a ToR. We start this session with a short discussion on clarity and scope of ToRs, and move to group work where participants - in sector-specific groups - frame a research question that builds a case for a new piece of evidence, possibly using questions framed in the session on relevant evidence (types of studies). Participants will consider whether ToRs should be question- or methodology-led, and how to balance quality with researcher freedom when drafting the design. Participants will draft ToR with their own choice of structure, which they then present in the following session.

*Reading*

Mahony, D. and Dearden, P. 2012. *Writing Terms of Reference: A Seven Step Format for the Preparation of Development ToRs*. Telford: Centre for International Development & Training (CIDT), University of Wolverhampton.

**15.15 – 15.30 Tea Break**

**15.30 – 17.00 Evaluating Terms of Reference (E2)**

*Main facilitator: Miguel Loureiro*

*Session objectives*

Participants to present their draft ToRs and draft guidelines for judging potential proposals.

*Content*

Once we have drafted ToRs, the following stage is to assess the quality of the different proposals we have received in order to select the best one. To helps us do so, both us and the applicants need to know want we want to see in the proposals. In this session, we use the participants presentations and their peers’ feedback to strengthen their initial ToRs by adding sections on instructions and expectations, as well as plan for some guidelines to judge the proposals received. We start by having each group present their draft ToR, followed by critical feedback from their peers. In order to make the session interactive and minimise fatigue (as it is the last session of Day 3), we will only allow a maximum of three to four groups to prepare and present ToRs. After all groups presented and received feedback, we will use some of the latter to bring in the last two points of the module, namely how to prepare instructions for applicants and how to judge proposals. For instructions we will mostly deal with issues related to formatting styles and how to create response templates in a generic group discussion. We end the session with each group discussing within themselves and then sharing with the other participants not only how to judge proposals (evaluation criteria), but also who should judge and when. Throughout this session, the facilitators compile a list of elements/sections that participants came up with for a generic ToR template.

*Reading*

ICTD (2010) ICTD User Guide 2: *Research Funding*. Brighton: International Centre for Tax and Development.

**17.00 – 17.30 Wrap up and course evaluation**

During lunchtime, participants are asked to raise any final overall questions and comments pertaining to the training, writing these on post-its and sticking them on a side board. After the final session, participants fill in a short evaluation form, after which facilitators discuss the post-its and try to answer all the facilitators’ questions.