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PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICAN SOCIAL
& GOVERNANCE RESEARCH

PASGR's Professional
Development and
Training Programme
**Evaluation
Report**
2011-2018

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E V A L U A T I O N   R E P O R T | PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING PROGRAMME (2011-2018)

Acknowledgements

Acronyms and abbreviations

AFIDEP	African Institute for Development Policy
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DAC	Development Assistance Programme
DFID-UK	Department for International Development, United Kingdom
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
dRPC	Development Research and Projects Centre
GBP	British Pound
HE	Higher Education
IDS	Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex
IE	Impact Evaluation
IR	Inception Report
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MMRC	Multi Methods Research Course
MRPP-A	Master of Research and Public Policy MRPP-Africa
NIPSS	National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies
NUST	National University of Science and Technology
NY	New York
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSIEA	Open Society Initiative for Eastern Africa
PASGR	Partnership for Social and Governance Research
PDT	Professional Development and Training
POT	Policy Outreach and Training
RFP	Request for Proposal
RUFORUM	The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies
SPHEIR-PedaL	Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education Innovation and Reform-Pedagogical Leadership in Africa
TBD	To Be Decided
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
VfM	Value for Money

Section I
Overview of the Professional Development and Training Programme

The Professional Development and Training (PDT) Programme

Professional Development and Training (PDT), popularly known as the **PASGR Institute**, is one of the anchor programmes of the Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR). Previously known as the Policy Outreach Training (POT) Programme, the PDT Programme represents an innovative arrangement between PASGR and its partners to design and deliver high quality, experiential professional training that builds policy actors' and researchers' skills and competencies.

The purpose of the Professional Development and Training (PDT) programme is to:

- Deliver experiential professional development that builds skills and competencies for policy actors, researchers and academic leaders

- Establish delivery partners to provide and accredit high-quality professional development courses

- Develop an active community of practice for excellence in research in the social sciences and humanities

- Achieve sustainability

About PASGR

PASGR is an independent, non-partisan Pan-African not-for-profit organisation established in 2011 and located in Nairobi, Kenya. Currently engaged in more than 15 African countries, PASGR works to enhance research excellence in governance and public policy that contributes to the overall wellbeing of women and men.

It's core programmes are Higher Education and Research, Professional Development and Training. It achieves its mandate through the design and delivery of training programmes and professional courses as well as production and dissemination of policy-relevant research.

PASGR's core objectives are to:

- Establish and sustain partnerships at national, regional and international levels for advancing research, higher education and training;

- Facilitate the creation of policy and research communities;

- Enhance the institutionalisation of a research culture in Africa's universities and research organisations; and,

- Co-ordinate a collaborative Master of Research and Public Policy (MRPP) and a Doctorate in Public Policy programme with selected Universities in Africa.

The goal of the PDT Programme **(PASGR Institute)** is to tool (equip) and re-tool (re-equip) early and mid-career individual researchers and institutional policy actors with research methods and policy analysis capacities. It seeks to deepen delivery partners' institutional capacity to design and deliver accredited, distinctive professional development courses, and to innovate in design and content, to enrich the learning experience and thereby maximise both impact and reach.

The PDT Programme's delivery strategy involves partnerships with local, regional and international organisations. It has a pan-African geographical focus, working in 24 Anglophone, Francophone, Lusophone and Arabic speaking countries (see map: Figure 1).

PDT courses are delivered through two main approaches: Open entry and tailor-made. Open entry courses target individuals with diverse backgrounds but with similar learning needs. Courses are scheduled on an annual timeline, and participants selected based on quality of applications and availability of funds. Tailor-made courses, delivered on request/ad hoc basis, typically target institutional teams with specific learning needs, through in-house training.

Figure 1. **PDT's footprint in Africa**

West Africa
GHANA
NIGERIA
S. LEONE
BENIN
LIBERIA

Central Africa
CAMEROON
DRC

North Africa
EGYPT

South Africa
ZIMBABWE
MALAWI
ZAMBIA
BOTSWANA
SOUTH AFRICA
NAMIBIA
MOZAMBIQUE
MADAGASCAR

East Africa
ETHIOPIA
KENYA
UGANDA
TANZANIA
RWANDA
SOMALIA
SUDAN
SOUTH SUDAN
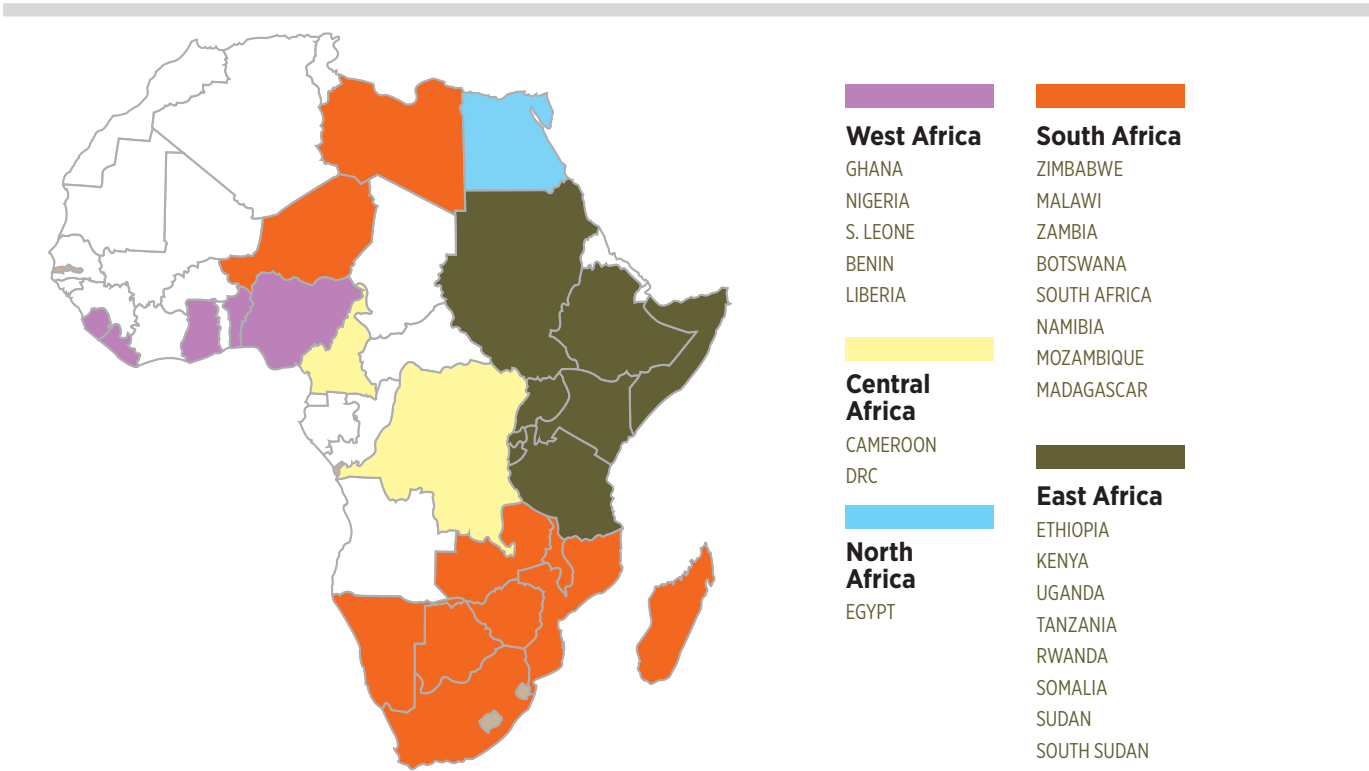
PDT Programme leadership and management

The PDT Programme operates under PASGR's leadership and management structure, headed by the Executive Director, Professor Tade Akin Aina — a renowned educational and research professional with vast international experience. The Programme Manager is Dr Pauline Ngimwa, an expert in higher education programmes management and researcher in information management and educational technology. The Programme Assistant, Ms Nyambura Irungu, provides administrative and logistical support. Other PASGR units, including Finance, Communications and IT, provide support services to facilitate smooth operations. The Programme engages independent resource persons as instructors and as course developers for its training programmes.

Rationale for evidence-based policy training and research in Africa

Demand for capacity development in evidence-based public policy and research can be attributed to the push for transformative governance in Africa, influenced by increased *democratisation* and *globalisation*, coupled with pressure for greater public accountability by a more informed citizenry. These developments have illuminated knowledge gaps in social science capacity, specifically for effective and high-quality training and research on public policy issues in Africa, and at the same time created demand for competent professionals to fill this gap.[1]

Insights on the status of social and political science research to inform public policy for effective governance in Africa reveal various weaknesses, including key prerequisites for promoting evidence-based decision-making in policy formulation and implementation. These are influenced by several factors, including, the quality of policy-research training available; skills and capacities of policymakers; and, ability of policy actors to engage and collaborate with other key stakeholders (i.e. students, academicians and policymakers) to ensure adequate interrogation, without which policy making and implementation in Africa may be challenged.

Another concern is the need for governments to consciously create an enabling environment for research institutions, academia and the private sector to generate and access data for critical analysis and informed, evidence-based decision making. This highlights a problem common in many African countries: *that of withholding important information and data useful for policy and other decisions.* The proposed remedy is to free up data access for scrutiny so it can be used to solve problems at national and sub national levels of government.

African governments should cultivate a culture of data sharing and access while ensuring data protection. Lessons can be learned from other countries that have more experience with public data management.

Policy implementation in Africa is also challenged by: limited resources, stakeholder participation in policy formulation and limited citizen awareness and inclusion. A multi-faceted approach is necessary for successful policy making, underpinned by changed attitudes and promotion of a culture of data sharing, access and security.

The diversity of socio-cultural, political, religious and economic contexts across Africa means that what works in one country may not work in another. This calls for synergy and coordination since policies have cross cutting mandates, are mutually dependent and do not work in isolation. Networks for policy engagement and involvement of research institutions enhance the uptake of evidence-based research collaboration amongst policymakers.

Research also pre-empts evidence use.[2] Think tanks in Africa play an important role in advancing cutting-edge options for improving policy and governance. However, think tanks face challenges of funding, independence, quality and impact. On quality and capacity, some think tanks struggle to match global

> African governments need to ensure a culture of data sharing and access coupled with data protection. Lessons can be learned from other world regions that have more experience with public data management. Policy implementation in Africa is however challenged by: limited resources for policy implementation, lack of wide stakeholder participation in policy formulation and lack of citizen awareness and inclusion

[1] Strategic Plan 2014-2018
[2] 'What can African Governments do to improve policy implementation? (AFIDEP 24th July 2018)

standards. The main hindrance is the limited number of highly trained scholars, communication and development professionals and think tank leaders and administrators.

Another key lesson is the need to develop and sustain high standards of data-driven, factual and replicable research with potential of enhancing innovative thinking. Collaborations and research bridging with very agile researchers who have strong policy skills is recommended. Identified threats to impact realisation include, the limited ability to communicate widely, low media exposure and networks, low interest of and access to policymakers, misaligned priorities, lack of trust and limited responsiveness. Building trust with policymakers and the public by consistently demonstrating high quality work through effective dissemination calls for clarity and simplicity of messages when communicating with the public. It also requires relevance and rapidly react to public concerns and adaptability to appropriate communication, training of citizens and involvement of decision makers, amongst other factors.[3]

It is important to understand the limitations of impacting policy change through building of social science research skills amongst academics and researchers. An LSE blog by James Lloyd[4] titled 'Should academics be expected to change policy? Six reasons why it is unrealistic for research to drive policy change' lists the following limitations: Some research has no policy relevance; much research supports the status quo; politics almost always trumps evidence; policy making is path dependent and chaotic; bounded rationality applies to researchers referring to limitations in analytical and knowledge capacity amongst academics, researchers and policymakers; and, influencing policy is a specialist, time consuming activity.

This understanding provides justification for the PDT Programme to engage policy actors more deliberately and intentionally either in training or dissemination of social science research information that is relevant to the ongoing discourse in their country. Ultimately, the best available evidence should inform policy decision making.

> Identified threats to impact realisation include, the limited ability to communicate widely, low media exposure and networks, low interest of and access to policymakers, misaligned priorities, lack of trust and limited responsiveness. Building trust with policymakers and the public by consistently demonstrating high quality work through effective dissemination entails clarity and simplicity of messages when communicating with the public.

[3] The Crisis of African Think Tanks: Challenges and Solutions 13th Dec 2017: Mccan, Singe and Mayangwa

[4] http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/66748/1/___lse.ac.uk_storage_LIBRARY_Secondary_libfile_shared_repository_Content_LSE%20Impact%20of%20Soc%20Sci%20blog_2016_May_Should%20academics%20be%20expected%20to%20change%20policy%20Six%20reasons%20why%20it%20is%20unrealistic%20for%20research%20to%20drive%20%20%281%29.pdf
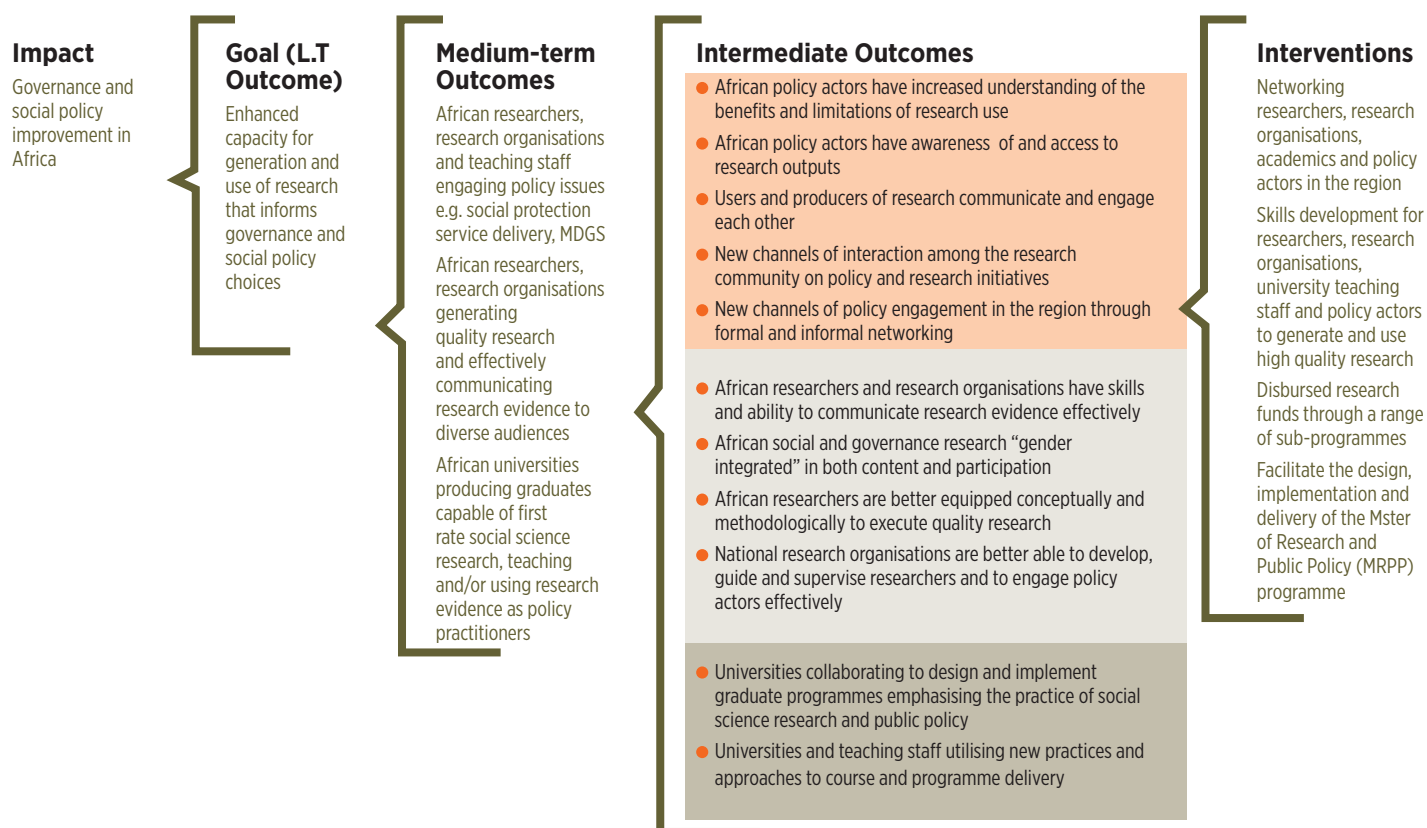
The Professional Development and Training Programme – Theory of Change

A theory of change is the articulation of the goals, underlying beliefs, and assumptions guiding an organisation's strategy, all of which are critical for producing change and institutional improvement. It puts forward the expected causal relationships between an organisation's interventions and its desired outcomes, thought of as preconditions for the achievement of long-term goal(s). An important element within a theory of change concerns the understanding of the relationships between all of the above mentioned components, considered as pathways of change.

The main underlying assumption of PASGR's theory of change is that an active base of users and producers of regional policy research effectively engaged and networked can contribute to improved governance and social policy in Africa.

PASGR's Theory of Change underpins the logic framework for the Policy Outreach and Training (POT) Programme from 2011 to mid-2014, before it transitioned to the Professional Development and Training Programme, the **PASGR Institute** (see Figure 2).
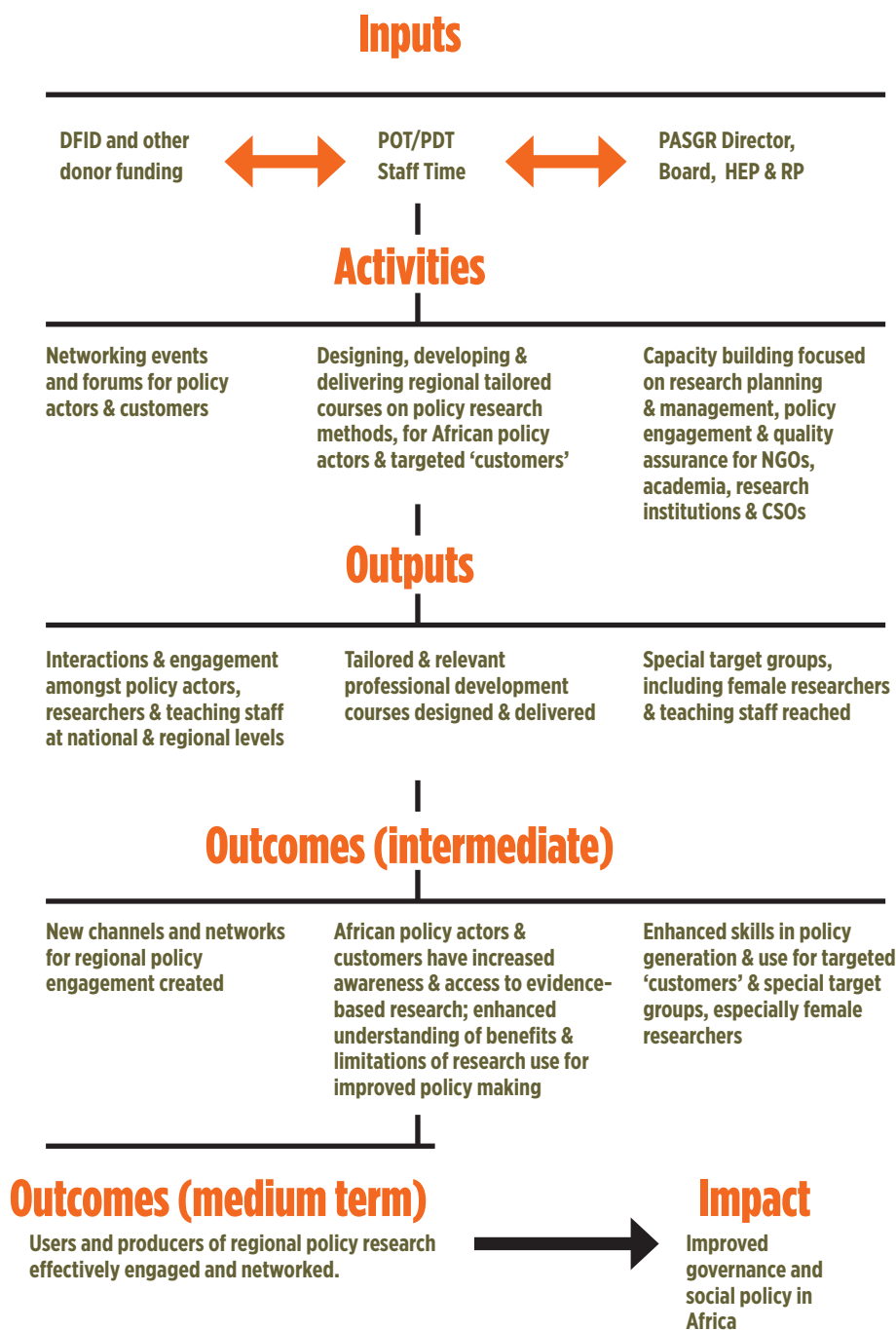
Figure 2: **PASGR's – Theory of Change**

Impact	Goal (L.T Outcome)	Medium-term Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes	Interventions
Governance and social policy improvement in Africa	Enhanced capacity for generation and use of research that informs governance and social policy choices	African researchers, research organisations and teaching staff engaging policy issues e.g. social protection service delivery, MDGS African researchers, research organisations generating quality research and effectively communicating research evidence to diverse audiences African universities producing graduates capable of first rate social science research, teaching and/or using research evidence as policy practitioners	• African policy actors have increased understanding of the benefits and limitations of research use • African policy actors have awareness of and access to research outputs • Users and producers of research communicate and engage each other • New channels of interaction among the research community on policy and research initiatives • New channels of policy engagement in the region through formal and informal networking • African researchers and research organisations have skills and ability to communicate research evidence effectively • African social and governance research "gender integrated" in both content and participation • African researchers are better equipped conceptually and methodologically to execute quality research • National research organisations are better able to develop, guide and supervise researchers and to engage policy actors effectively • Universities collaborating to design and implement graduate programmes emphasising the practice of social science research and public policy • Universities and teaching staff utilising new practices and approaches to course and programme delivery	Networking researchers, research organisations, academics and policy actors in the region Skills development for researchers, research organisations, university teaching staff and policy actors to generate and use high quality research Disbursed research funds through a range of sub-programmes Facilitate the design, implementation and delivery of the Mster of Research and Public Policy (MRPP) programme

Key assumptions: 1. Those involved in public policy see the value of using research; 2. Social governance research is timely and relevant; 3. Social science research and research organisations are motivated to produce and communicate policy relevant research; 4. Universities are willing to collaborate operationally as well as in the design and development stage; 5. Sufficient number of universities able to attain approval to drive masters programme forward; 6. Universities are committed and capable of innovation, entrepreneurship and change; 7. Researchers, think tanks, universities, and other organisations are willing to collaborate and interact across organisational boundaries; 8. Domor interest in the programme is sustained

A revised theory of change for PDF explains the drivers of change and change pathways, risk and assumptions for the programme from 2011-2018 (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. **Revised PDT Theory of Change Diagram (2011-2018)**

Inputs

DFID and other donor funding	POT/PDT Staff Time	PASGR Director, Board, HEP & RP

Activities

Networking events and forums for policy actors & customers	Designing, developing & delivering regional tailored courses on policy research methods, for African policy actors & targeted 'customers'	Capacity building focused on research planning & management, policy engagement & quality assurance for NGOs, academia, research institutions & CSOs

Outputs

Interactions & engagement amongst policy actors, researchers & teaching staff at national & regional levels	Tailored & relevant professional development courses designed & delivered	Special target groups, including female researchers & teaching staff reached

Outcomes (intermediate)

New channels and networks for regional policy engagement created	African policy actors & customers have increased awareness & access to evidence-based research; enhanced understanding of benefits & limitations of research use for improved policy making	Enhanced skills in policy generation & use for targeted 'customers' & special target groups, especially female researchers

Outcomes (medium term)

Users and producers of regional policy research effectively engaged and networked.

Impact

Improved governance and social policy in Africa

The main underlying assumption of PASGR's theory of change is that an active base of users and producers of regional policy research effectively engaged and networked can contribute to improved governance and social policy in Africa.

The intermediate outcomes refer to a set of conditions required for the PDT Programme to effectively sustain engagement of regional policy research users and producers to influence governance and social policy in Africa. They include:

- New channels and networks for regional policy engagement created through formal and informal networks
- Awareness and access to evidence-based research by African policy actors and stakeholders increased, and level of communication and engagement between research users and producers enhanced
- Understanding of benefits and limitations of research use for improved policy making enhanced, including improved management by research organisations of research processes
- Skills in policy generation and use for targeted 'customers' and special target groups, especially female researchers, enhanced.

PDT outcomes are realised through the following programme strategies:

- Regional and national interactions and engagement amongst policy actors, researchers and teaching staff on specific policy issues, through events and forums
- Designing, developing and delivering relevant, tailored professional development courses on policy research methods for African policy actors and targeted clients
- Tailoring and delivering courses targeting special groups, including female researchers and teaching staff; and,
- Capacity building focused on research planning and management, policy engagement and quality assurance for NGOs, academia, research institutions and CSOs

Key inputs into the pilot phase of the Policy Outreach and Training programme (2011-2014) and the subsequent phase of the PDT Programme (2014-2018) were:

- Funding from DFID and other donors who are also users of policy research
- Time spent by POT and PASGR programme management in programme activity planning, budgeting, implementation, co-ordination, support and reporting
- Human resources in terms of programme management team and staff supporting the PDT outputs

PDT Programme strategies during the 2014-2018 evaluation period were effected through specific activities and outputs:[5]

- Implementation of the overall PASGR Strategy (2014-2018) supported through various activities of the PDT Programme
- Professional development focused on research methodology, research presentation skills, gender integrated research and policy engagement. For example:
    - o PDT tailored and relevant activities, including professional development short courses and workshops, designed and delivered
    - o Effective course participants' selection and enrolment

Total beneficiaries of PDT program since inception has reached 1,491 persons. Out of these, 883 persons were repeat trainees (59% of participants have attended more than one PDT training course

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[5] PASGR Logframe 2017

- o 100% completion rate of PDT activities, including formal and informal structured skills enhancement (i.e. development of PDT course materials and participation in short courses by MRPP lead course instructors).[6]
- o Participant days of capacity building delivered per year increased by over 50% from the baseline.
- Networking of African policy actors
- Interactions among policy actors and researchers at national and regional levels;
  - o Organisational capacity building focused on research methods programme planning and management, policy engagement and quality assurance
- Targeting of special groups, including female researchers and teaching staff.

Through partnership with institutions to offer in-house training, PDT was able to recover most of its operational costs and made a significant step towards self-sustainability.

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[6] PASGR 2014-2018 Logframe Output 4

PDT Programme highlights (2014 – 2018)

The PDT Programme tools and retools key players in various disciplines and sectors, including academia, civil society organisations (CSOs), development partners, state and non-state policy actors and research institutions. Short-term tailor-made courses are intentionally designed and targeted to serve the needs of diverse audiences (i.e. African academics, think tanks, research institutions, policy actors, graduate students).

Total beneficiaries

- At least 1,491 people have benefited from the PDT Programme since inception. Out of these, 883 were repeat trainees (59% of participants have attended more than one PDT training course).

High quality short courses

- PDT's suite of high quality, short courses has grown since 2014, and now comprises 12 research modules and 3 policy modules. Five new modules have been developed and piloted since 2014 to fit the new demand-driven training programme. These are:
  - Ethics in Social Science Research Methods
  - Engendering Social Science Research Methods
  - Informed Research Consumers
  - University Leadership and Peak Performance for Deans
  - University Governance and Policy for University Vice Chancellors
- The Multi-Methods Research Course (MMRC) that underwent major reconfiguration in tandem with PASGR's 2014-2018 Strategic Plan yielded the Advanced Research Design (ARD) course for policy-oriented research, with multiple training modules aligned to the three PASGR building blocks.

Tailored courses

- The PDT course design is targeting specific audiences by offering in-house trainings, and is considering diversifying course delivery to include Francophone and Lusophone African participants.

Course delivery

- PDT course delivery employs innovative binary, on and offline, as well as theoretical and practical approaches. ICTs are incorporated to enhance learning.
- Use of interactive learning methods is helping participants to get a more practical, experiential approach to training. This includes, group discussions and role play.

The PDT course design is targeting specific audiences by offering in-house trainings, and is considering diversifying course delivery to include Francophone and Lusophone African participan

Innovation

- The PDT Programme applies world-class innovation to enrich experiential delivery of PDT. This include blending face-to-face and e-learning through online knowledge collaboration platforms.
- Multi-media resources for course delivery include animation videos, recorded 'instructional moments' from previous training, instructional video clips and web-based interaction.

Mainstreaming gender

- The PDT Programme acknowledges the need for gender integration in sustainable development, promotes equal access to training by both female and male participants, provides content that is gender sensitive and well mainstreamed, and offers relevant and targeted modules on engendering social science research. A module has been developed on 'Engendering Social Science Research Methods.'

Strengthening quality of instruction

- The PDT Programme has worked towards expanding and strengthening its pool of African instructors. Through mentorship, this new pool of instructors has enhanced their own professional competences and benefited the PDT Programme. Networks and partnerships formed amongst the diverse participants and instructors of the PDT Programme and PASGR with other organisations is enriching knowledge generation and sharing.

Cost-effectiveness

- PDT is diversifying in course delivery to cut costs while ensuring the training opportunities are still within the reach of the target audiences by offering institution-based course delivery
- Funding from PASGR's partners has enabled individuals who would have otherwise not attended the training due to financial constrains to do so.

Sustainability

- Through partnership with institutions to offer in-house training, PDT was able to recover most of its operational costs and made a significant step towards self-sustainability.
- A new Business Plan (2018-2021) outlines the PDT Programme's strategy to become financially self-sustaining.

1,491

People have benefited from the PDT Programme since iception. Out of these, 883 were repeat trainees (59% of participants have attended more than one PDT training course).

Section II
The Evaluation

Objectives

In 2019, PASGR commissioned an evaluation of the PDT Programme covering the seven-year implementation period (2011-2018). The aim of the evaluation was to: Assess PDT's contribution to the achievement of the organisation's mission of enhancing research excellence in public policy; Assess the impact of PDT's training on the beneficiaries; Identify gaps and lessons that can be used to inform the programme's strategic direction in the next phase; Generate recommendations for continued programme interventions and scale up.

The evaluation objectives as defined in the Terms of Reference were to:

- Assess the effectiveness of the programme and track impact made since inception
- Assess the relevance of the training in relation to current skills gaps in policy research of the target audience
- Examine and analyse factors that have impacted positively and/or negatively on the achievement of the programme's outcomes
- Assess the effectiveness of the implementation process including but not limited to the selection of participants and programme development and delivery
- Identify successful innovations in the programme design and implementation and their contribution to the achievement of the programme's outcomes
- Examine financial viability of the programme's sustainability efforts
- Assess effectiveness of institutional partnership strategies;
- Document lessons learnt and best practices; and,
- Suggest recommendations for improving the programme's design and implementation for scale up and sustained impact.

Scope and stakeholder base

The evaluation of the PDT Programme assessed the extent to which overall objectives, targets, planned outputs outcomes and impact had been realised. Geographically, the evaluation focused on the total achievements across 23 African countries. Institutionally, the programme's contributions to course quality, as well as instructor and student experience in 13 universities were analysed. Policy-makers, PhD students, independent researchers, research

organisations, civil society researchers and university teaching staff were primary information sources. External contractors, funders, members of the oversight committees, beneficiaries, co-implementers and other related organisations were consulted too.

The broad categories of stakeholders consulted in the evaluation were:

- PDT Programme management and implementation team, including the Programme Manager, Programme Assistant and PASGR Executive Director

- Programme resource persons (i.e. PDT course instructors), including MRPP instructors from 13 universities in seven countries, and research institutions engaged as implementation partners

- Peer reviewers and course developers from partner institutions, such as the IDS-University of Sussex, Centre for Gender Studies, (SOAS) - University of London, University of Amsterdam Research Centre for Gender and Sexuality and the Hubert Project- University of Minnesota.

- Funding partners, including representatives of DFID, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Carnegie Cooperation, Ford Foundation, AuthorAid and OSIEA.

- Customers/beneficiaries, specifically target audiences, participants and alumni of PDT short courses. These included representatives of government ministries and departments, civil society organisations, research and academic institutions, think tanks, corporate research units, and national parliaments. Strategic partners included the National university of Science and Technology (NUST), Zimbabwe; the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), Nigeria; Development Research and Projects Centre (dRPC), Nigeria; and the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM).

- Oversight structures providing guidance to PDT implementation, including PASGR Board members and other PASGR Programme section heads.

- Like-minded organisations with similar interventions and potential synergistic relationship with PDT, including, AFIDEP, APHRC and CODESRIA.

Evaluation approach and methodology

The PDT Programme evaluation framework (based on the Results Based Managed Approach) and a revised Theory of Change were informed by literature reviews of relevant documentation, including the PDT Business Plan and PASGR Strategic Plan (2014-2018), Annual Reports and External Reviews.

The PDT evaluation applied four main criteria: Relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact, as well as co-ordination, sustainability and Value for Money (VfM).[7] An evaluation matrix (see Annex 1) developed by the consultant and the PDT Programme team outlines the conceptual approach, and specifies the main and sub-questions as well as the indicators and methods of data collection.[8] The evaluation assumed both a retrospective and prospective outlook, focusing on its implementation experience and results, the opportunities for scale up, viability of funding and future sustainability.

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[7] The evaluation objectives follow the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Programme (DAC) best guidelines for evaluation.

[8] See Annex 1 Evaluation Matrix

The following methodological approaches were used:

- **Theory of change** to provide clarity for PDT Programme objectives in the short-, medium- and long-term, including the beliefs and assumptions of how improved capacities contribute to wider development goals. A clear understanding of those relationships was crucial for defining criteria specific enough to measure the success achieved in each of the pathways of change. An updated PDT Theory of Change, developed with the PDT Programme team, helped to promote understanding about programme intervention logic, as well as the key drivers of change, underlying assumptions and external risks.

- **Mixed Methods Evaluation** combining qualitative and quantitative methods to establish a satisfactory analysis regarding the relevance and quality of the PDT Programme approach.

- **Stakeholder engagement** in order to adapt the scope and perspective of the evaluation to different national and local contexts, the evaluation process invited stakeholders to reflect on the PDT contribution in sustaining engagement of regional policy research users and producers to influence governance and social policy in Africa.

Data collection

The Evaluation Matrix and its criteria informed the data collection process, comprised of an online survey sent to partner countries under the Centre's continuous support list, semi-structured interviews, desk review, consultations with partners and participant observation.

- Key Informant Interviews were conducted with a sample of pre-selected participants. A Stakeholder Map with information about each stakeholder's role in the programme was developed in a previous Inception Report that guided the evaluation. PDT management, partners and key stakeholders were invited to share their views and opinions about the programme, its design, implementation experience, intermediate and longer-term outcomes, impact and potential impact.

- An online survey questionnaire was used to gather relevant qualitative and quantitative data from key informants.

- The Desk Review involved content analysis of primary and secondary sources of data. This included a thorough review of the PDT Programme business development plan, organisational strategic plan, progress reports, final annual reports and assessments, external reviews and evaluations, actual and projected expenditure reports, funding partners' contributions, instructors' reports, PDT course evaluations, annual reviews, annual reports, PDT Board Reports, PSGR Board Reports, among other secondary publications.

- Focus Group Discussions were conducted with course instructors and selected customers (e.g. participants exiting the programme)

- Observations were made on partner universities' facilities for the courses and various country contexts (e.g. equipment, language, course materials, instruction delivery).

The quantitative data collected from structured questionnaires were analysed using STATA to obtain relevant descriptive statistics, such as cross-tabulations, percentages, charts and frequency tables. Qualitative data analysis was done using thematic coding, determined by the evaluation objectives, criteria and key evaluation questions.

Data analysis and reporting

Following the mixed-methods evaluation approach, findings were based on a combined analysis of quantitative and qualitative evidence. The quantitative results presented throughout this report only reflect the diversity of respondents to the survey, rather than a definite statement of its total figures. It is worth mentioning that all responses were based on the respondents' views and perceptions.

The quantitative data collected from structured questionnaires were analysed using STATA to obtain relevant descriptive statistics, such as cross-tabulations, percentages, charts and frequency tables. Qualitative data analysis was done using thematic coding, determined by the evaluation objectives, criteria and key evaluation questions. Qualitative data analysis was reported against the data analysis matrix. The findings from the qualitative and quantitative data analysis were triangulated by source and method to obtain descriptive findings

and conclusions relevant and responsive to the evaluation objectives. These were subsequently transformed into normative recommendations to address issues that were judged as sufficiently important and operational.

A total population of 849 PDT course participants were invited to participate in the online survey, which yielded a modest response rate (about 20%). Analysis of the responses rate that most of the PDT evaluation participants are from the East African region (Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania), followed by West Africa, specifically Nigeria and Ghana. The central, northern and southern African regions are under-represented, a reflection of the PDT Programme's scope of coverage.

Table 1: **Sectors/ Institutions represented by PDT Programme survey respondents**

Institution/Sector category	Number	Percent
Government	20	10.0
Universities	93	46.5
Policy research institution	17	8.5
NGO	7	3.5
REC	1	0.5
Corporate Business	1	0.5
Not representing any organisation	3	1.5
No response	58	29.0

849

PDT course participants were invited to participate in the online survey, which yielded a modest response rate (about 20%)

Figure 4: **Distribution of PDT Survey respondents to online survey by African country**

Country	Value
Kenya	47
Nigeria	34
Uganda	31
Tanzania	10
Zimbabwe	8
Ghana	6
Sierra Leone	3
Sudan	2
South Sudan	2
Liberia	2
Ethiopia	2
DRC	2
Botswana	2
South Africa	1
Rwanda	1
Niger	1
Namibia	1
Malawi	1
Madagascar	1
Egypt	1
Côte D'Ivoire	1
Cameroon	1
Angola	1
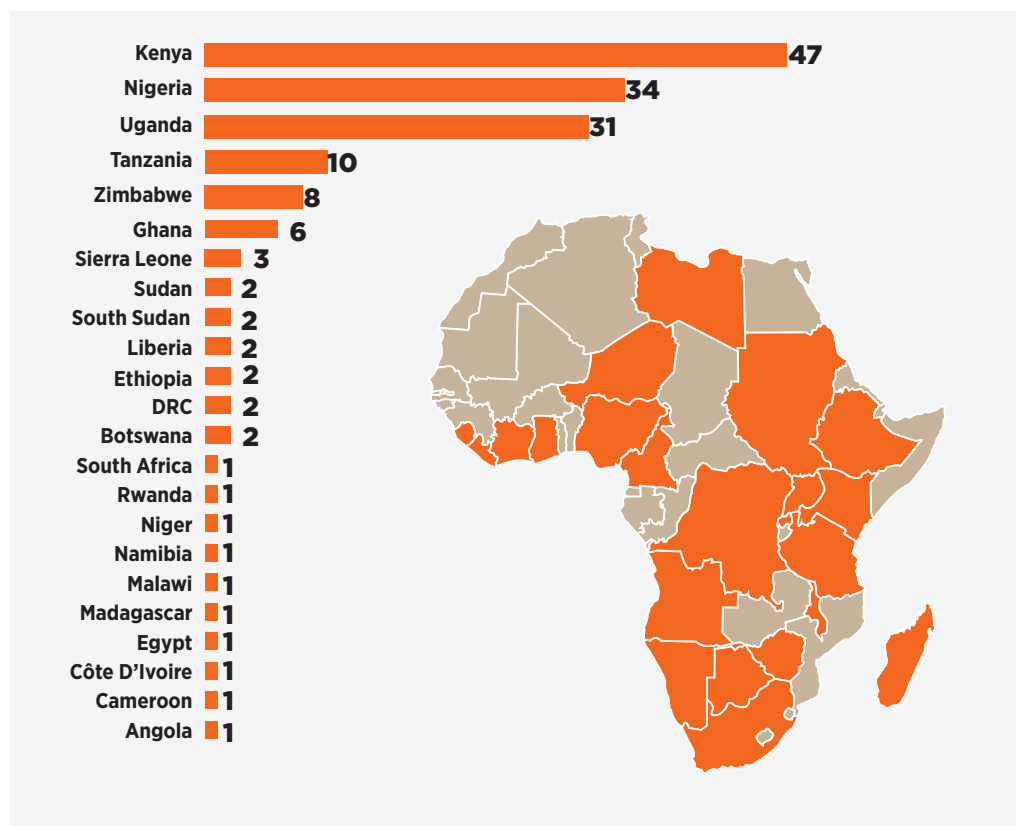
Limitations of the Evaluation

The PDT evaluation faced some key challenges and limitations:

- **Timing:** The pilot phase of the Policy Outreach and Training project, which preceded the PDT Programme, captured a snapshot of the programmes in the early stages of implementation. The fact that the PDT Programme was implemented in two phases, with management transitions, created a challenge for the evaluation in terms of access to data. Most of the PDT reports and documents have a reporting timeframe starting from 2014. Limited information is available on the previous period 2011-2014, including contacts of participants which were sometimes found to be inaccurate or irrelevant. There was also limited access to disaggregated financial data on the PDT Programme. This challenge is mitigated by presenting conclusions as formative; the overall picture of the effectiveness of the programme and emerging change is likely to change in future stages.

- **Partial data set:** Primary data comes only from the selected case study countries, not from all programme sites. It is, therefore, limited in what it can say about how the PDT Programme works in all settings.

- **Geographical spread:** A limitation/risk of the PDT evaluation identified during the inception phase is the potentially low response rate to the online survey and inadequate time for follow up within a wide geographic context to ensure adequacy and sufficiency of information. This was in fact proven to be a real risk. However, it was mitigated as planned, through close follow-up by the consultant and her assistants via email as well as through extension of the online survey period in line with the projected evaluation period.

- **Africa-wide representation:** The biased distribution of online survey respondents by AU region is representative of the PDT Programme's reach across Africa (see Figure 5). More than half of PDT Programme participants are from Eastern Africa. This is attributable to various factors. Firstly, the PASGR offices, PDT Programme and most training activities are located in Nairobi, Kenya. Secondly, some donor policies (e.g. OSIEA) restrict funding only to specific regions (e.g. East Africa).

Figure 5: **Distribution of PDT Survey respondents by AU region**

30% Western

09% Southern

01% Northern

01% Central

59% Eastern
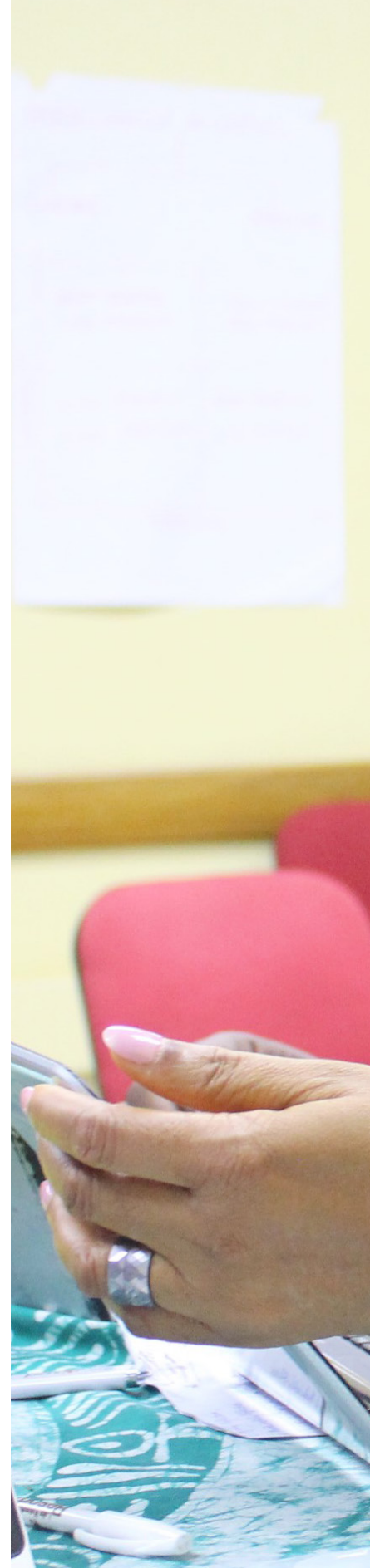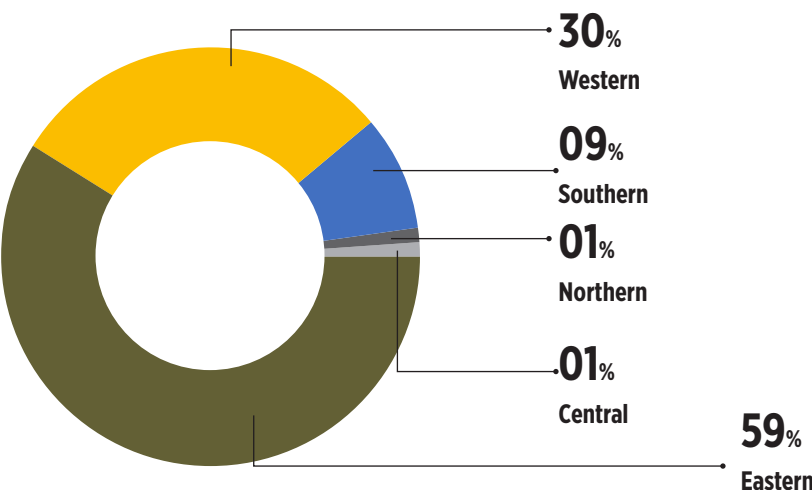
Section III
Findings and Conclusions

This section presents the main findings of the evaluation, organised by the dimensions and criteria established by the Evaluation Matrix. For each evaluation question, the following content is explored: (i) analysis of the main findings for each criterion through qualitative and quantitative evidence; (ii) analysis of explanatory factors and linkages between outputs, outcomes and impacts.

Relevance and coherence

The evaluation defined relevance as: "*alignment, appropriateness and/or suitability of a development intervention's objectives to beneficiary requirements, country needs, global priorities, and partner and donor policies."*[9] Coherence, on the other hand, focused on *determining the alignment of policies or actors* with each other.

Alignment to global and regional development priorities

PASGR's programmes, including the PDT Programme, are aligned to global and regional development aspirations. Initially aligned to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), PASGR's programmes' objectives fit in with the UN global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to end poverty by 2030. The objectives encompass pan-Africanism ideals and reach, reflecting Africa's development blueprint— Agenda 2063—as well as regional and national priorities of Africa Union member countries.

Alignment towards enhanced quality of policy research in Africa

The PDT Programme was developed in response to identified gaps in social and political science research to inform public policy for effective governance in Africa. It provides a strategic link towards PASGR's goal of *'enhanced capacity for the generation and use of research that informs governance and social policy choices'.* The aim is to facilitate acquisition by policy researchers, academicians and policy actors of suitable skills and competencies necessary for addressing governance and public policy issues in Africa.

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[9] Guidelines for Project and Programme Evaluations-Austrian Development Cooperation (2009)

Alignment with the organisational vision and strategy

The PDT Programme is one of the three building blocks of PASGR's vision[10] of a *'vibrant African social science community addressing the continent's public policy issues'*, and the mission of *'advancing research excellence for governance and public policy in Africa".*[11]

The PDT Programme is a key contributor to the success and popularity of the Master of Research and Public Policy Degree (MRPP) Course offered by PASGR's Higher Education Programme in partnership with 13 universities in seven African countries.

The jointly developed Multi-Methods Research Course (MMRC) has undergone major reconfiguration in tandem with PASGR's Strategic Plan. This has resulted in restructuring into the Advanced Research Design (ARD) course for policy-oriented research, with multiple training modules aligned to the three PASGR building blocks. The course is relevant to PhD students, academics, policy researchers and policy actors and lends itself to the Multi-Methods Research (MMR) approach which is relevant to social policy and/or governance.

The pedagogy and design of the PDT courses is relevant to the programme objectives. In addition to training policy professionals, the Programme has engaged relevant stakeholders, including international universities — such as IDS University of Sussex, UK—African universities and civil society organisations (CSOs) in the development, review and delivery of these courses. This is geared towards developing participants' skills and competencies and enhancing their institutional capacity to design and offer high quality development courses.[12]

Relevance to current skills gaps of researchers, policy actors, market interests and demands for capacity development and training

By tooling and retooling instructors, researchers, policy actors and lecturers, the PDT Programme enables trainees benefit from quality instruction that is highly regarded and well subscribed. The PDT Programme responds to often-cited concerns on the quality of many Masters degree courses offered in Africa, that do not fully equip graduates with requisite research skills to pursue their studies effectively.

The evaluation findings highlighted the relevance of the PDT Programme to work functions and institutional capacity building needs (see Table 5). Respondents described PDT courses as relevant, attractive in quality, fairly priced compared to similar offerings, and offered real *value for money.* They indicated willingness for self-sponsorship to meet training costs if they were not funded to attend them. Some respondents who had missed earlier training opportunities due to oversubscription to the courses reported that they still retained interest to apply for future training.

'The programme revolutionised the way I thought of research. I was able to rethink the way I had been teaching research methods. I was more encouraged to go out and do research myself'. (Senior university lecturer, Co-ordinator of Counseling Psychology programmes)

"The course provided a special package of knowledge that was not exhaustively tackled by the universities i attended for my undergraduate and master's degrees. The courses exposed participants to the most recent developments in the social sciences." (Regional Team leader, Policy Research Institution)

"I lacked good grounding in conceptualisation and analysis. After this course, I got a breakthrough and I'm now confident about completing my thesis" (Doctoral Student)

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[10] The other two being the Research Programme and Higher Education Programme

[11] http://www.PASGR.org/who-we-are/about-us/

[12] PASGR Strategic Plan 2014-2018

Table 3: **Relevance of the PDT Programme online survey responses**

Variable	Don't agree at all	Neither agree nor disagree	Fully agree	Don't know	Total
a. The programme was relevant to my current functions at work.	0.9	3.4	95.7	0.0	117
b. The programme was relevant to the needs of my organisation/ institution	0.0	8.5	91.5	0.0	117

Figure 5: **Follow-up training of PDT courses**

ARD Elective Courses		Not attended ARD		Have attended ARD	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
i.	Engendering social science research methods	4	4.5	26	23.4
ii.	Ethnographic and Interpretive methods	5	5.6	31	27.9
iii.	Impact evaluation	6	6.7	27	24.3
iv.	Survey design	3	3.4	23	20.7
v.	Action research	4	4.5	25	22.5
vi.	Applied quantitative methods	3	3.4	21	18.9
vii.	Comparative case analysis	3	3.4	32	28.8
viii.	Social Network Analysis	3	3.4	22	19.8

Note: Number (%) of survey respondents who attended ARD elective courses, disaggregated by those who had attended a compulsory ARD module and those who had not

Relevance of design to innovation and scope for future enhancement

The evaluation put a spotlight on the PDT Programme's unique approach and innovative pedagogy in the social sciences and humanities. PDT is credited with providing an enhanced and rich learning experience with positive outcomes. A unique characteristic is its focus on research and link to policy evidence.

The programme is dedicated to building the capacity of participants in social science research skills through the Advance Research Design (ARD) course architecture, including electives. These offer a balanced approach: i.e. mixed methods- qualitative and quantitative, binary platforms -off and online, theoretical and practical training and focus on cross cutting issues such as gender impact evaluation and innovation. Demand for capacity development and training is surging as evidenced by increased demand and subscription to the courses.

Innovations introduced in the PDT Programme include use of animation videos, recorded 'instructional moments' from previous training, instructional video clips and web-based interactive material. These were reported by respondents to be effective tools in offering positive learning experiences. Respondents reported they were satisfied with the course delivery design, particularly with regard to the use of blended approach (i.e. face-to-face and e-learning through the MOODLE platform). Use of technology in class set-ups was cited as a

The relevance of the PDT Programme is captured in some testimonials of key informants

"The world continues to experience more complex developmental challenges. As researchers, to unearth all this evidence, we need to employ multiple methods at different stages of inquiry. It has been very helpful for me and I'm professionally enlightened" (Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Officer – NGO)

"I was able to appreciate the importance of meshing qualitative and quantitative research. Initially I believed that qualitative research methods were better than quantitative methods but I have learnt better" (Principal Policy Analyst, policy research institution)

'The courses opened my eyes to practical practices of early career research and on how to design social inquiry, research uptake and communication to stakeholders. The patience required in carrying out research from beginning to finish' (Principal Librarian, University)

"I am now able to better conceptualise my research work. For instance, during the training, I developed the research idea/ concept into a research proposal that I used to successfully apply for funding (30,000 USD) from CODESRIA to carry it out." (Ward Administrator)

unique attribute of PDT Programme courses that is not commonplace with similar trainings they have attended locally, regionally or even internationally.

In addition to this, web-based interactive processes such as the online pre-engagement have been applied, where students take a prerequisite online assignment prior to the face-to-face training. Based on the appreciation of Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) in delivery of the PDT training courses to support teaching and learning, it is expected that the programme will continue to integrate technology in its approach to building research and policy capacity.

The PDT Programme uses social media platforms—such as Google+, Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, amongst others—to recruit and reach out to potential participants, and for virtual classroom interactions, for example, sharing of learning materials with course participants.

Scope for future enhancement indicates higher levels of innovation, especially online learning platforms. This has potential to mitigate the negative effects of low enrolment despite interest shown, due to inability by participants to afford the costs associated with the courses. There are other inherent challenges brought about by weak infrastructural support in many African countries, such as, unreliable and inconsistent electricity supply and limited or high cost of internet services. Other specific limitations for use of ICT platforms in university settings were revealed during the PedaL course held in Mombasa in June, 2019. They include: immovable/fixed infrastructure (desks) and inadequate electricity ports, and the lack of access to wireless internet in many universities. Countries such as Nigeria, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Ethiopia are constrained by electricity rationing, hindering productivity and efficiency of online engagement.

Cross cutting issues: Gender integration

The PDT Programme acknowledges the relevance of gender integration in sustainable regional development, monitors participation to ensure equal access to women and men, and has developed suitable modules on these topics. A concept note on engendering the policy making process in Africa takes cognisance of the transformational nature of governments in Africa and demands for gender sensitive policies. A newly-introduced module on engendering social science research methods has attracted significant interest from potential participants willing to self-fund, as well as the donor community.

Responsiveness to unique characteristics and needs of target beneficiaries

The PDT Programme primarily targets early and mid-career researchers and policy actors, to enable them generate and use high quality policy research. While attention has so far focused on academics and researchers — mainly from universities, research institutions, think-tanks, government departments and civil society organisations — it is now shifting to include practitioners and professionals who apply research for policy impact.

To ensure relevance to its target audience, the PDT training incorporated the following components:[13]

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[13] PASGR Strategic Plan 2014-2018

- A researcher-centered component that builds and enhances research capacity for emerging early and mid-career researchers and academics;

- A policy actor-centered component that aims at enhancing the capacity of policy actors to appreciate research and data for public policy;

- Ongoing assessment of the training by participants from different target groups;

- Annual recruitment of a new generation of instructors to help teach the programme; and,

- Updating by instructors of the training each year to ensure that it continues to meet the demands of target audiences and participants.

To respond to the diverse characteristics and needs of these groups, the PDT Trogramme has developed and continues to offer training modules in various configurations to their different audiences. PDT has open-entry courses (offered to a diverse audience) and tailor-made courses (targeting institutions and participants with similar training needs). The latter are normally delivered as in-house training, for example, NUST training in Zimbabwe). Course instructors update the training each year and help ensure it continues to meet the demands of the PDT Programme's target audience.

Learning from previous experience

The PDT Programme has demonstrated its awareness about the importance of remaining relevant. It provides cutting edge training through consistent and continuous review and revision of its pedagogical modes and approaches, with a view to adapting to clients' demands, and influencing the socio-political context. This involves adoption of recommendations emerging from previous studies, PDT reports and participants' end of training evaluation reports.

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Effectiveness of the PDT Programme

Contribution to enhancing capacity to utilise policy research and recommendations

The PDT Programme has continued to enhance the capacity of targeted beneficiaries to utilise policy research. This is evidenced in the emergence of a community of practice, which has been achieved through the retention of beneficiaries as facilitators and instructors in subsequent PDT trainings. There has been significant retention of knowledge through capacitation of regional instructors as academic co-ordinators.

Contribution to enhancing quality policy research in Africa

The PDT Programme, through fellowships and scholarships, contributes to enhancing the pool of competent policy researchers and actors. Publications shared through the IDS bulletin and other peer reviewed journals have also contributed to the pool of knowledge that policy actors in Africa can draw from.[14]

Utilisation of evidence-based research in PDT courses

PDT Programme has engaged relevant stakeholders including universities and civil society organisations in the development, review and delivery of its courses.

The PDT Programme believes in continuous improvement and development. This is evidenced by the annual revision of all modules to update the courses based on feedback from previous training sessions; carrying out a pre-training meeting of all the instructors in readiness for the training sessions; establishing modules quality control which is done by PASGR in conjunction with IDS, University of Sussex, UK.

Review of PDT courses

In addition to training policy professionals, the PDT Programme has engaged relevant stakeholders including universities and civil society organisations in the development, review and delivery of its courses. This is geared towards developing participants' skills and competencies and enhancing their institutional capacity to design and offer high quality development courses.[15]
  The PDT Programme has potential to reach new and emerging markets with more contextualised courses. The ultimate purpose of the PDT training however will vary amongst participants, some of whom may decide to dedicate themselves to policy research, while others may become better researchers, university lecturers and postgraduate supervisors.[16]

Mainstreaming gender

The PDT Programme strives to promote equal access to training by both female and male participants, and ensuring that gender issues are well mainstreamed in the course content. For example, a PDT workshop with gender training modules conducted from April-May 2017 attracted the highest ratio of female to male participants (51% females, 48% males) since inception of the programme.

Sustainable learning and development

A key objective of the PDT Programme is to create a Community of Practice (CoP) in an effort to promote sustainable learning and development. A unique strategy of the programme is the 'pooling' together of learners into round-tables. This has encouraged team work/ building and fostered the establishment of long-lasting relationships between and amongst both participants and trainers. The programme employs social media platforms, such as

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[14] PDT Report _April2017

[15] PASGR Strategic Plan 2014-2018

[16] PDT Board Report October 2017

WhatsApp groups, to promote sharing of social science research methods, information and opportunities. The platforms also facilitate discourse on future training and research opportunities in an effort to foster cohesion and positive engagement beyond the actual training events.

Key drivers of success of the PDT Programme

Demand-driven courses

High demand for capacity development and training offered by the PDT Programme is evidenced by sustained subscription to the courses, even when training fees are applied. PDT Programme records show consistent increase in the subscription enrolment for the modules offered, with some participants signing up for several courses. For instance, more than twenty participants have participated in at least five different workshops.[17] That most respondents reported having learned about the PDT Programme through referrals suggests high endorsement by PDT alumni.

Value for money

PDT courses are reported to be competitively priced compared to other course packages offered by similar organisations like APHRC, CODESRIA. The courses are intense and have the unique aspect of linking research and policy, making PDT courses more competitive than those offered by other organisations. The bridge between research and policy addresses inherent weaknesses in traditional, social science research methods that are not linked to practice.

A unique blended approach of learning and pedagogy

The PDT Programme offers a unique approach that blends learning and pedagogy. According to participants interviewed, no other organisation is roffers this quality of training within a short period. This blended learning approach is a strength for the PDT Programme course design and is reported to be very well balanced, combining lectures, practical work and IT-based software for analysing qualitative and quantitative methods for social research.

Rigorous selection process

The PDT team applies rigorous strategies in the identification and selection of suitable participants for training. On application, interested candidates are required to submit a research concept note that is used to determine applicants' strengths and weaknesses. The candidates are then shortlisted based on pre-identified criteria. The information obtained during the shortlisting helps in identifying the knowledge gaps among new cohorts of trainees. During preparation for the training, course evaluation reports from previous study cohorts are used to inform PDT Programme team of existing skills gaps of both participants and instructors.

A two-day preparation course, pre-training workshop for instructors is conducted, in which the instructors review and fill their skills gaps and evaluate trainees' knowledge and skills gaps based on the online pre-engagement and their applications. These enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the courses for both the trainer and trainees, given that the PDT Programme team receives this information before the actual training. These strategies help in tailoring of the PDT courses to fulfill identified knowledge gaps.

> PDT Programme records show consistent increase in the subscription-enrolment for the modules offered, with some participants signing up for several courses. For instance, more than twenty participants have participated in at least five different workshops. That most respondents reported having learned about the PDT Programme through referrals suggests high endorsement by PDT alumni.

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[17] Summary of workshop records (6)

High integrity and quality standards

To ensure that the course's integrity and quality standards are safeguarded, the PDT Programme team holds a structured, pre-course orientation meeting for the course instructors before each training session. This has helped to improve both the course design and delivery through peer review and sharing of information about factors that hinder or enhance course delivery effectiveness and the participants' experience through innovative approaches.

Networking and interactions between researchers and policy stakeholders

The effectiveness of the PDT Programme is evident in the quality of networking and interactions between researchers and policy stakeholders. PDT alumni reported that their knowledge, skills and confidence to engage policy actors had improved following the training. Positive feedback from workshop participants indicates that the PDT workshops are useful. University lecturers see the workshops as valuable for enhancing their effectiveness as researchers and post graduate supervisors. This was confirmed by the evaluation that noted significant positive feedback from participants about their course experience and its potential to enhance their university teaching capacity and supervisory approach to graduate thesis design.

Community of Practice

The PDT Programme culture of talent retention and integration through the Community of Practice has contributed towards nurturing and mentoring instructors from the pool of talented participants. The growing community of instructors and participants, facilitated through social media platforms such as WhatsApp groups for each cohort, is a good practice that can be emulated by other organisations.

PDT course relevance

The PDT courses are considered to be relevant, with quality offerings and fairly priced. Majority of respondents expressed willingness to cater for training expenses if they were not funded. Another indicator of relevance is the number of participants who returned to pursue additional PDT courses: Some 883 (about 60%) out of 1491 participants were returnees who had attended more than one PDT training course.[18] Also, most respondents reported having learnt of the PDT Programme courses through referrals from alumni, indicating high confidence in the courses. There is, however, an opportunity for the PDT Programme to expand its scope to reach out to professionals beyond the current scope of social science research.

Effective Communication

Communication from the applicantion process to the actual training was reported to be excellent by most participants. Specifically, online engagement was cited to be such an effective platform for communication that alumni want it to continue even after course completion, with follow-ups and updates.

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[18] Summary of workshop records (6)

Contextualisation of course content to fit the African country context

PDT instructors and participants, including doctoral students, were unanimous that the courses are relevant to their work and studies mainly due to the teaching approach and pedagogy. Contextualisation of research and policy content to fit the African situation was singled out as a beneficial component. Use of practical examples and e-cases of research and policy theory content enabled PDT course participants to relate theoretical concepts with their practical application.

Donor support

Donor support has enabled wider participation in the PDT Programme's trainings. However, the funding is only available to a limited number of participants, and is tied to donor priorities and earmarked for strategic focus countries. This limits the programme's reach and ability to target needy participants, especially from the academia.

Major constraints to delivery of PDT Programme results

Cost and inadequate funding for courses

By far the greatest challenge to the PDT Programme is affordability of the courses by participants. Impact and scalability of the PDT Programme are constrained by the requirement for participants to meet the full training costs of training (approximately USD900, inclusive of accommodation and transportation). Even though PDT courses are offered at a relatively lower cost than comparable courses elsewhere, respondents indicated inability to pay, even when the cost is subsidised.

Moreover, funding levels are inadequate and cannot facilitate comprehensive sub-regional and institutional-based course offers. Respondents expressed desire to have decentralised course offerings, with sponsorships particularly targeting qualified but financially challenged individuals who are missing out on training opportunities.

Lack of an enabling PDT trainee work environment for skills transfer

Respondents cited a rigid institutional culture and stifling bureaucracy as factors that affected their ability to transfer or apply the skills gained from the PDT training to their work environment, resulting in low uptake of evidence-based policy research. This suggests that the PDT Programme should endeavour to secure goodwill and buy-in from top institutional leadership and policy makers to enable effective knowledge transfer and uptake. An exceptional example is the University of Ibadan in Nigeria, which has demonstrated commitment and interest in the PDT Programme.

Programme visibility

A key challenge of the PDT Programme is generally low visibility. Most of the programmes' target audiences and markets are neither aware of the existence of PASGR nor of the PDT Programme. Low visibility was identified by participants and donors as a key barrier to the success and expansion of the PDT Programme's reach and budget. This was attributed in part to PASGR's relative newness as an organisation compared to similar entities. It could also be due to preoccupation by PDT staff with enhancing programme quality, with limited human resources. The RUFORUM was cited as an example of a regional organisation with strong

visibility that the PDT Programme could learn from. Nigeria was also cited as a country where PASGR enjoys prominent visibility on the policy landscape.

Competing priorities among target audiences

Training is not highly ranked as a priority among target participants, especially among academicians who reportedly assign more time to consultancies, teaching extra classes and other commercial activities.

Weak infrastructure in the region

A barrier often cited by PDT's curriculum development partner, IDS, is the lack of *"international support of leading experts in the relevant methodologies".* Planning for PDT Programme implementation across Africa should take into account countries' disparities of ICT connectivity and electricity infrastructure. There is need to strike a balance between e-learning and traditional learning methods. PDT facilitators should be innovative to ensure course content is available to all learners in spite of varying internet connectivity levels and technical competencies. This can be achieved by adopting a blended learning approach with both online and offline platforms. PDT instructors also require additional professional opportunities to keep them engaged and committed to the programme, as well as adequate funding to enable them keep abreast with current training methods and approaches.

Low regional representation

Whereas PASGR aspires to be an *"Africa-led programme targeting Africans to empower themselves to come up with African solutions to African problems,"* its reach is limited. There is unbalanced representation, dominated by East and West African regions. Almost per cent of participants in PDT Programme courses since inception are from East Africa (63%) and West Africa (27%) alone, mostly Anglophone countries, i.e, Kenya and Nigeria.[19] There is a need to deepen engagement in the Francophone, Lusophone and Arabic language zones of Africa.

Inadequate human resource capacity

The PDT Programme is staffed by a manager and programme officer only. This capacity is considered inadequate for the level of engagement, follow-up and demands for support needed to serve 13 institutions of higher learning and 13 institutions of higher learning. It was also noted that PASGR (and the PDT Programme) lacks a dedicated Business Development unit to mobilise resources, explore and nurture partnerships, sustain relationships with stakeholders and maintain follow-ups with alumni.

Irregular course offerings

Some participants recommended that the PDT courses should be better targeted and offered more often.

> **"... PDT course offers its content solely in English. This is a challenge. The PDT Programme can reflect a more Pan-African outlook by translating content into French, Portuguese and Arabic languages, and adjusting content to suit different socio-cultural and country contexts so that the course content and meaning is not lost in the translation process..." (PDT course instructor DRC)**

> **"PDT has a good programme. They work hard to develop courses. However, follow up is weak. They could benefit from significant funding and additional human resources to inform donors of results, as well as keep communication/follow up with course participants post the course trainings, offerings and networking events..." (OSIEA-donor)**

> **"...There's a notable weakness of irregular course offerings, especially for the research elective and policy-oriented courses/modules e.g. Social Network Analysis. ARD foundational research courses are the only regular course offerings; offered twice a year (Apr/May, Nov.)..." PDT course alumni and instructor**

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[19] Summary of workshop records (6)

Efficiency and Value for Money

Efficiencies are achieved through harnessing skills and capacities of alumni, trainees and by collaborating with other PASGR building blocks to bridge funding and human resource gaps, thereby enhancing synergies

This Evaluation did not analyse financial data to gauge efficiency and value for money. Even so, donors had positive responses on delivery of activities and on budgets against plans. Respondents' feedback also shows that the PDT Programme is achieving and promoting efficiencies through cost recovery mechanisms.

Training costs on tailored courses are shared with target institutions that provide the training venue, conferencing halls and accommodation for trainees. Affordability of the courses is managed by allowing participants to choose from a suite of elective modules in addition to foundational/compulsory modules.

Efficiencies are further achieved through harnessing skills and capacities of alumni, trainees and by collaborating with other PASGR building blocks to bridge funding and human resource gaps, thereby enhancing synergies. Sourcing PDT training instructors from the Higher Education Programme, and by identifying alumni from the pool of past trainees, as potential tutors the PDT Programme capitalises on the gains made so far. It contributes to capacity building and enhances the efficiency of resource use, enhancing the available pool of competent trainers. Enhanced efficiencies are also achieved by PASGR's Finance Unit which ensures timely disbursement of funds to the programme activities and participants.
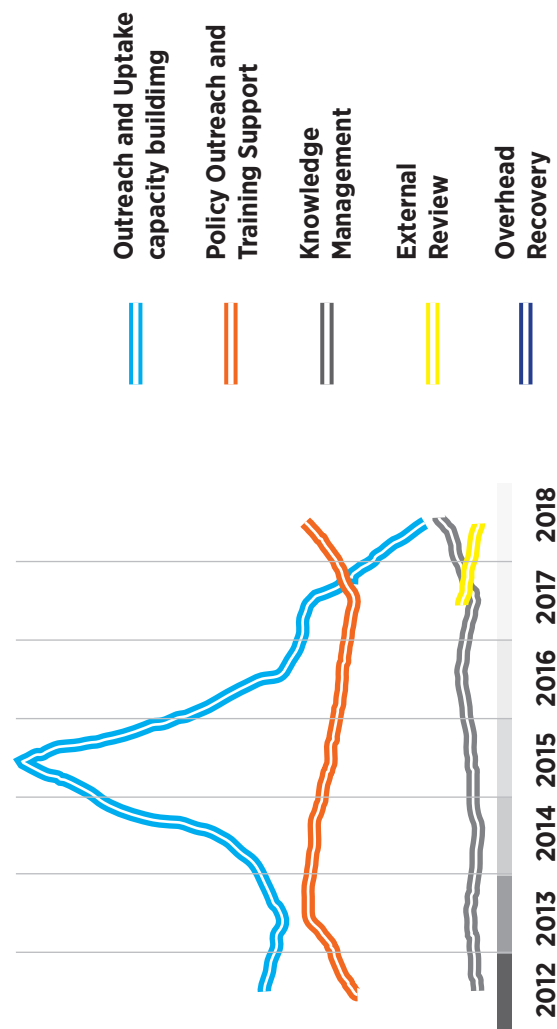
PDT Programme financial summary

PASGR is funded by donors who support different programme activities based on their priorities. The PDT Programme was initially supported fully by DFID seed funding to PASGR. The funding base has since diversified to include additional donors: Carnegie Corporation, FORD Foundation, Open Society Initiative of East Africa (OSIEA), Hewlett, and AuthorAid. Annual expenditures show a declining trend for PDT Programme activities since 2015 (see Table 4 and Figure 4).

Table 4: **Annual expenditure by PDT Programme activity area since 2012**

Activity	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total GBP
Outreach and Uptake capacity building	439,382	405,754	517,738	922,947	409,679	347,698	114,085	3,157,283
Policy Outreach and Training Support	254,645	347,988	340,953	302,154	284,263	256,587	357,585	2,144,175
Knowledge management	3,928	13,082	1,426	17,016	41,083	11,976	79,386	167,897
External review						32,099	-	32,099
Overhead Recovery					2,224			2,224
TOTAL	697,955	766,824	860,117	1,242,117	737,249	648,360	551,056	5,503,678

Source: PDT Programme management and PASGR Finance Unit

Figure 4 **Annual expenditure trends by PDT activity area since 2012**

Outreach and Uptake capacity buildimg

Policy Outreach and Training Support

Knowledge Management

External Review

Overhead Recovery

2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018

Impact

Impact on participants' capacity and ability to effectively apply new learnings

Much of the impact evidence so far is anecdotal and derived from participants through interviews and through document reviews.

- Past participants reported professional growth and access to new opportunities following PDT training, including access to fellowships, scholarships, promotions and consultancy opportunities. PDT courses and activities are also influencing national policy and governance, for example, in Uganda and Zimbabwe.

- Participants' research capacity has been reported to have been enhanced through the PDT's practical approach. This is evidenced through application of a common field study through the mentorship of IDS, resulting in five in-country studies conducted and findings published in the IDS bulletin as peer-reviewed papers and on individual blogs. The bulletin provided Africa-specific open-access case materials for use during training. Being open-access it has provided MRPP students with readily accessible material for their studies and enhanced PASGR's visibility.[20] Further, this output has been effective in transferring training and identifying knowledge gaps amongst participants, which is central to continuous learning and improvement.

- The Impact Evaluation module of the PDT Programme is attracting significant interest from research and donor organisations and the development sector. ITAD for example, is willing to self-fund.

- A significant achievement by the PDT is the promotion of equal access to training by both female and male participants and providing content that is gender sensitive and well mainstreamed. However, sustaining high levels of female participants is still a challenge.

- Respondents indicate that participation in PDT courses has enabled them to fast-track completion of PhDs courses, and to improve the quality of research proposals and theses. Faculty members from various regional universities noted improvements in their teaching and content delivery approaches following PDT training, evidenced by improved research outputs (e.g. better-quality master's theses) from their students.

- Partnerships and collaborations amongst PDT course participants/alumni and instructors are reported to have resulted in successful grant applications for research, community development projects and consultancies. Following these improvements, some faculty members have earned job promotions.

A survey of all researchers and instructors who have taken the PDT Methods Training and some follow up case studies would help to present a stronger evidence-base for determining the PDT's real and potential impacts.

> **...There has been evidence of transfer of skills because the way I teach is not the way I used to teach and even the way our students do their research and present their papers is different from the way they used to do. And because of that change, many lecturers want to come for the trainings. For example, in the last training about six lecturers from my department attended the training. They have seen what I have gained and they also want to gain so that their students can also benefit..."** (PDT course alumni)

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[20] PDT Report April 2017

Co-ordination, collaboration and partnerships

PASGR co-ordinates its three core programmes (PDT, Research and Higher Education) to bring together stakeholders to establish and sustain partnerships, facilitate the creation of policy and research communities and enhance institutionalisation of a research culture in Africa.[21] Notably, these programme areas work horizontally and are not confined to silos. There was evidence of programmes collaborating and utilising existing synergies such as partnerships with higher institutions of learning to introduce and implement programme activities. For example, MRPP partner institutions have played important roles in advancing PDT short courses across the region. Countries with strong MRPP presence reflect stronger presence and uptake of the PDT courses as well. In addition, some MRPP instructors are also PDT course participants and instructors for some modules. This collaboration amongst the three PASGR programmes has also enabled the PDT Programme to make cost recoveries and savings as discussed under the efficiency section. For example, the PDT Programme trains, tools and retools MRPP instructors on the short PDT courses as well. In these cases, PDT provides the technical skills (i.e. trainers and instructors), whereas HE contributes financial inputs and reporting. PDT instructors have also contributed guidance to the development and rolling out of the PedaL programme.

Partnerships and collaborations amongst PDT course participants/ alumni and instructors are reported to have resulted in successful grant applications for research, community development projects and consultancies. Following these improvements, some faculty members have earned job promotions

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[21] Strategic plan 2014-18

Sustainability and exit strategy

As part of efforts towards sustainability, the PDT Programme adopted a cost-sharing model in 2015 through which participants pay for their transport fees while PASGR caters for training and accommodation. Savings were realised in venue costs by utilising partners' institutional premises instead of hotels to host participants.

The PDT Programme business plan and marketing strategy, aligned to PASGR's Strategic Plan, envisions a strategic shift towards sustainability through a self-financing model. Full-cost recovery was successfully implemented in February 2018, with participants meeting all the costs. Simultaneously, the PDT Programme's facilitation capacity has been continuously enhanced through strengthening and expansion of its regional instructor portfolio. The institutional delivery model is also a major step forward towards self-sustainability through institutional partnerships.

The PDT Programme has successfully applied cost saving and recovery strategies through institutional based trainings of Uganda Parliament, NIPPS Nigeria, and NUST Zimbabwe. Through such strategic targeting and reaching out to individuals and organisations capable and willing to sponsor themselves, the programme has achieved cost savings. Some courses, such as Impact Evaluation, have an authentic appeal to donors. Consequently, development partners are willing and able to pay for their beneficiary organisations to attend this PDT course.

Overall, the evaluation observed a need to establish a good balance between programme outreach strategies (i.e. fully funded courses) and commercialisation of courses for sustainability (i.e. strike a balance between non-profit and for-profit angles for PDT Programme's sustainability).

Diversification of funding sources by the PDT Programme is critical to its sustainability. The PDT Programme should engage with a wide base of potential financiers, besides their traditional funders, to mobilize resources. OSIEA was cited as a potential funder to support the PDT Programme to carry out a tracer study to follow up on past trainees. The African Union (AU) is also a potential partner to support African policy research. Other funding opportunities can be tapped from universities and research institutions, who can utilise their research funds to sponsor participants to PDT Programme courses. Leveraging on already established PDT alumni networks could also help the PDT Programme to explore new funding opportunities, such as research grants; attract new participants; open up new markets; and, strengthen collaboration with other PASGR programme work, in the Research and Higher Education programmes.

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Key recommendations

- The cost-sharing approach should be continued for new course offerings that are in high demand (e.g. Impact Evaluation, Advanced Quantitative Methods, Gender Methods).

- To the extent possible, the PDT Programme should endeavour to offer partial or full scholarships for deserving participants with high potential to contribute to policy research evidence but are unable to pay for the courses.

- The PDT Programme should strengthen collaboration and nurture strong relationships with partnering institutions, including donors, by promoting a culture of reflection and learning. Regular feedback to donors is key to establishing sustainable partnerships, driving momentum and creating greater interest in PASGR's work.

- To promote financial sustainability, the PDT Programme should focus on institutionalising and sustaining teaching capacity for African instructors.

- PDT trainings should be decentralised across the African region to ease access and reduce travel and accommodation costs. This calls for strengthened collaboration with partnering universities and research institutions in Anglophone, Lusophone, Arabic and Francophone countries.

- Efforts are already under way at PASGR and the PDT with the doctoral programme planned at the University of Pretoria, and the University of Ibadan in Nigeria. This should continue with focus on locations with cohorts of trained PDT alumni who can be supported to offer these trainings. Economies of scale would be achieved by employing alumni as instructors in their own countries, thereby impacting a greater number of participants with the PDT's benefits in the longer term.

- The peculiarities and unique circumstances of countries or regions should be considered when designing delivery of courses.

- On pedagogy, the PDT should continue to incorporate and strengthen the binary on and offline training platforms and promote the balanced practical and theoretical approaches that have proven to be successful so far. It should enhance the pedagogy and inclusivity by building new, diversified linguistic materials (e.g. in French) and also for targeted groups (i.e. religious institutions, business, civil society, policymakers, vice chancellors and academic participants).

- Knowledge capture and documentation of lessons will enable opportunities for piloting, review and reflection for improved PDT Programme development.

- Engender the gender course delivery mechanism by ensuring a balanced mix of female and male instructors.

- Build and promote the PDT brand around its unique, short courses that link social science research to policy.

- Diversify trainers, clarity and employ a transparent process for recruitment of trainers and selection of participants for training.

> PDT trainings should be decentralised across the African region to ease access and reduce travel and accommodation costs. This calls for strengthened collaboration with partnering universities and research institutions in Anglophone, Lusophone, Arabic and Francophone countries.

- Enhance the less subscribed courses through participant feedback to ensure responsiveness and relevance.

- Promote demand and cost sharing to foster self-sustaining funding streams in future.

- Restructure the course design to include adequate time for the pre-course online engagement, reflection, networking, field trips and ICT adoption. This will allow participants to better prepare for the trainings.

- Enhanced visibility should be a deliberate, intentional and well-resourced effort by PASGR, ideally with a dedicated staff member or unit charged with this responsibility. Promotion of the PDT Programme should be anchored by definitive marketing strategy and communications approaches across all of Africa, and target participants, institutional partners and donors.

- The PDT Programme should endeavour to recruit two fulltime positions: (1) Programme Communications/Business Development Services/ Marketing Specialist to promote PDT's visibility; and, (2) Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Specialist responsible for conducting review and reflection exercises, documenting success stories and distilling learnings for programme implementation. In the interim, the PDT Programme should engage a consultant to develop an Impact Strategy and a Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEAL) framework.

Conclusion

The PDT Programme is a key component for delivering PASGR's objectives to build capacities for improved governance and evidence-based social policy research in Africa. Overall, the PDT Programme is a well-appreciated programme and its offerings are regarded by researchers and policy actors, as well as course instructors and academicians as relevant, effective, highly specialised and unique. The programme, however, must address key challenges and seize available opportunities to ensure it remains relevant to meet the ever-changing realities and demands for robust, evidenced-based social policy research.

Annex
Evaluation matrix

A. Relevance

Key Questions	Evaluation Methods	Proposed Sources of Data and Information
1. How well aligned is the programme design and implementation strategy towards enhanced quality of policy research in Africa?	Key informant interviews, FGDs, desk review, meetings, online survey	PASGR SP, PASGR & PDT Programme Log frames and ToC, PDT BP, instructor reports, course participants alumni impact stories and testimonials, annual reviews and reports; KIIs with PASGR board, PDT Programme manager, course instructors, donor reps, and partner orgs. & peer reviewers (IDS, SOAS), course alumni, other similar orgs. (e.g. AFIDEP, APHRC, CODESRIA)
2. How relevant is the training provided by the programme in relation to:- - Current skills gaps of researchers and policy actors and; - Market interests and demands for capacity development and training?	Desk review, interviews, online survey, baselines, FGDs	PDT course evaluations, instructor reports, course participants/alumni impact stories and testimonials, PDT BP, PASGR SP, published reports on skills gaps, market interests and demands in policy research, PASGR & PDT Log frames and ToC; KIIs with donor reps, programme manager, instructors, partner orgs, course designers & peer reviewers (i.e. IDS, Center for Gender Studies, (SOAS) - University of London, University of Amsterdam Research Center for Gender and Sexuality and the Hubert Project- University of Minnesota), course alumni, other similar orgs. (i.e. AFIDEP, APHRC, CODESRIA)
3. How relevant is the programme design to cross-cutting issues such as gender integration and suitability of innovation? - What is the scope for future enhancement?	Desk review, interviews, online survey, FGDs	Programme Baselines, log frames, ToC on gender integration into research, Progress reports; KIIs with course developers, peer reviewers, partner orgs. (IDS, Centre for Gender Studies, SOAS- University of London, and University of Amsterdam Research Center for Gender and Sexuality), course instructors, participants, alumni, programme manager
4. How did the PDT Programme ensure design, implementation and activities respond to the unique characteristics and needs of target beneficiaries?	Key informant interviews, FGDs, desk review, meetings, online survey	PDT course evaluations, instructor reports, course participants/alumni impact stories and testimonials, progress reports, ; KIIs with donor reps, programme manager, instructors, partner orgs., course designers & peer reviewers (i.e. IDS, Center for Gender Studies, (SOAS) - University of London, University of Amsterdam Research Center for Gender and Sexuality and the Hubert Project- University of Minnesota), course alumni, other similar orgs. (i.e. AFIDEP, APHRC, CODESRIA)
5. To what extent do the PDT activities and courses align with the PASGR organisational vision and strategy?	Key informant interviews, desk review, meetings, survey	Progress Reports, PASGR SP and PDT BP, Annual reports and reviews, Previous external review and evaluation reports; KIIs with PASGR board, PDT Programme manager and staff, other PASGR section heads, donor reps, course developers and instructors, partner orgs (IDS) , course participants and alumni
6. How were the findings and recommendations emerging from previous studies and reports considered and integrated in the revised PDT Programme?	Desk review, key informant Interviews, meetings, FGDs	KIIs with PASGR board, programme manager, donor reps, other PASGR section heads, staff, instructors, partner orgs (IDS), course instructors, peer reviewers & course co-developers; PDT board reports, progress reports, PDT BP, PASGR SP, PASGR external review and evaluation reports, Towards a data revolution report, publications, annual reviews and reports

B. Effectiveness

Key Questions	Evaluation methods	Proposed Sources of Data and Information
7. To what extent has the PDT Programme enhanced capacity of targeted beneficiaries in utilising policy research, and recommendations?	Key informant interviews, meetings, Course participants'/ alumni online survey, FGDs	KIIs with PASGR management, programme staff, course participants, alumni & beneficiaries (Parliament of Uganda, NUST- Zimbabwe, NIPSS- Nigeria, DRPC- Nigeria, RUFORUM), instructors, course developers/peer reviewers, partner orgs; progress reports, PDT board reports, annual reports and reviews, previous evaluation and review reports
8. What evidence demonstrates and confirms the PDT's results in promoting quality policy research in Africa?	Key informant interviews, meetings, online survey, observation, documentary evidence, FGDs	KIIs with PASGR management, PDT Programme staff, course participants, alumni & beneficiaries (e.g. NUST, NIPPS), instructors, course developers/peer reviewers, partner orgs. (IDS, SOAS), survey respondents; progress Reports, existing impact stories and testimonials from course alumni, annual reports and reviews, PDT board reports, previous evaluation reports
9. To what extent has the PDT utilised evidence-based research in its courses?	Key informant interviews, meetings, desk review, online survey, FGDs	KIIs with PDT Programme Staff, PASGR section heads, course participants, alumni & beneficiaries (e.g. NUST, NIPPS), instructors, course developers/peer reviewers, partner orgs. (IDS, SOAS), Survey respondents; progress reports, course modules, PDT board reports, annual reports and reviews, instructor reports, PDT evaluations, alumni impact stories and testimonials
10. What are the key drivers and barriers affecting the success or failure of delivery of results of the PDT Programme?	Key informant interviews, meetings with key actors, desk reviews, course participants' online survey, FGDs	KIIs with PASGR management, board, PDT programme manager, course participants, alumni & beneficiaries (Parliament of Uganda, NUST- Zimbabwe, NIPSS- Nigeria, DRPC- Nigeria, RUFORUM), instructors, course developers/ peer reviewers, partner orgs. (IDS, SOAS), similar orgs. (e.g. AFIDEP, APHRC, CODESRIA); progress reports, PDT board reports, previous external review and evaluation reports, PDT BP, PASGR SP, annual reports and reviews, PASGR & PDT log frames & ToC

C. Efficiency

Key Questions	Evaluation methods	Proposed Sources of Data and Information
11. To what extent did the grantee deliver activities on time and on budget against agreed plans?	Key informant interviews, meetings, desk review	KIIs with donor reps, PASGR board, PDT Programme manager, Finance dept.; donor reports, PDT board reports, financial documents and reports, annual reports and reviews, previous external review and evaluation reports, actual vs. projected expenditure
12. To what extent and in what ways did the programme achieve good value for money?	Key informant interviews, meetings, desk review, FGDs	KIIs with donor reps, PASGR Board, PDT Programme manager, Finance dept., partner institutions (IDS), Course instructors, participants and alumni reps; donor reports, PDT board Reports, financial documents and reports, annual reports and reviews, previous external reviews and evaluation reports, actual vs. projected expenditure
13. To what extent did the programme understand their cost drivers and how these relate to performance requirements?	Key informant interviews, meetings, desk review	KIIs with donor reps, PASGR Board, PDT Programme manager, Finance dept., partner institutions (IDS), course instructors; donor reports, PDT board reports, financial documents and reports, previous evaluation reports, annual reports and reviews

D. Progress towards intended Impact

Key Questions	Evaluation methods	Proposed Sources of Data and Information
14. To what extent and how has the PDT Programme impacted on the target participants' capacity and ability to effectively apply learning from its courses?	Key informant interviews, FGDs, online survey, document reviews	KIIs with PASGR Board, PDT Programme manager, alumni and direct beneficiaries (NUST, Uganda Parliament etc.), partner institutions (IDS), course instructors; PDT Board reports, Impact stories and testimonials, previous evaluation reports, annual reports and reviews, PDT course evaluations, progress reports
15. How many people/ institutions are receiving support from the programme that otherwise would not have received support? How many of these people were unintended beneficiaries?	Key informant interviews, FGDs, online survey, document reviews	KIIs with PASGR Board, PDT Programme manager, other PASGR section heads, alumni and direct beneficiaries, partner institutions (IDS), course instructors; PDT Board reports, impact stories and testimonials, previous evaluation reports, annual reports and reviews, progress reports, relevant publications including from partner orgs.

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