



25 years
Research and knowledge
at the heart of development

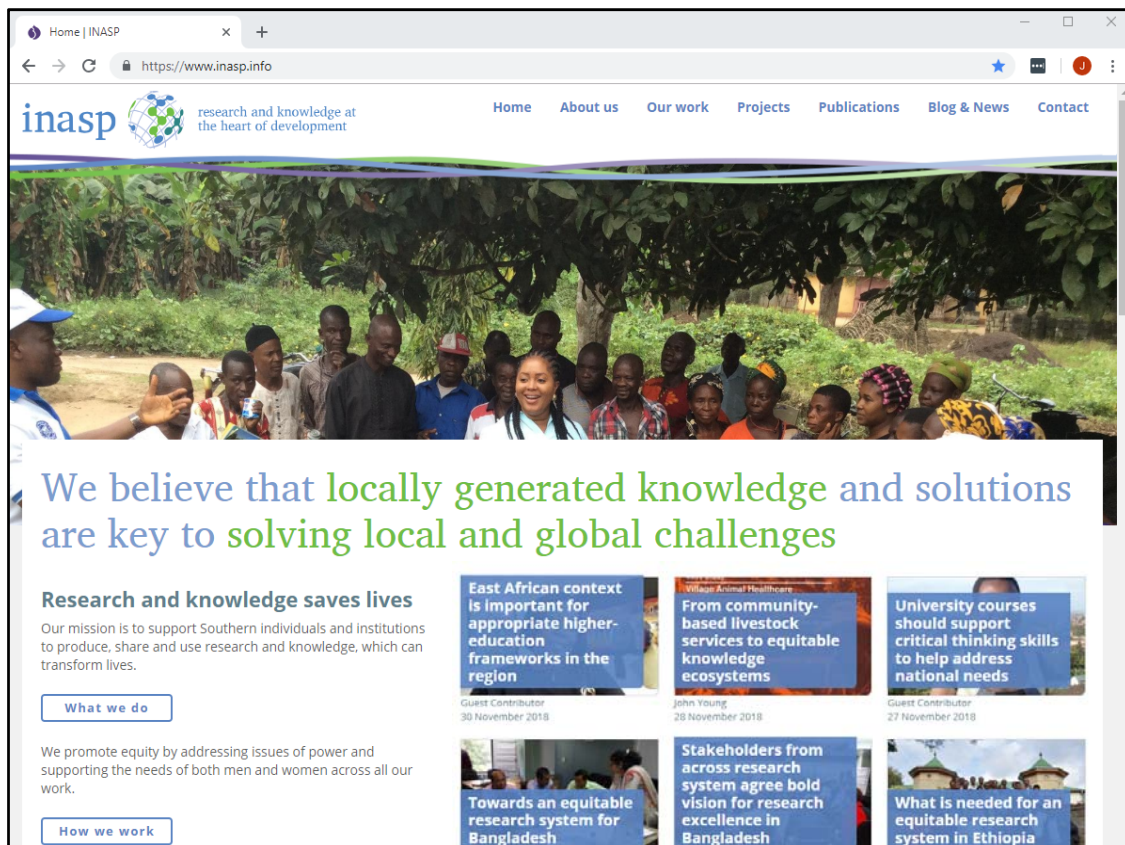
Equitable knowledge ecosystems:

What they are, why they are important,
and what donors can do to
help build them.

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In this talk I'm going to tell you a bit about my organisation and what we do. Describe what we mean by equitable knowledge systems and why they are important. I will talk about how Indonesia and the Australian Department of foreign affairs and trade are collaborating on the Indonesia Knowledge Sector Initiative, and the early lessons from a review of the first phase, and provide some recommendations for international donors on how they could help to establish them elsewhere.



- INASP aims to put knowledge and research at the heart of development
- We have over 25 years experience of working in partnership with actors across the research and knowledge system in Africa, Asia and Latin America. including universities and research institutes, NGO's and think-tanks, government institutions, and national bodies such as library consortia and research councils.
- Based on this experience it seems to us that high quality knowledge that is relevant and addresses pressing problems can only be produced collaboratively: where the people who need it and can use it, and the people who produce it, work together.
- Current approaches tend to create islands of excellence. We need to spread capacity and opportunity beyond these if we are to harness the diverse and critical talents, ideas and energies that exist. We need to transform the system as a whole to enable developing countries to harness knowledge to address their own challenges.

Further information: www.inasp.info

The knowledge ecosystem includes all the individuals and organisations who commission, fund, produce, communicate and use research; the formal and informal relationships between them; and the norms, practices and policies which shape their interactions.

Equitable knowledge ecosystems:

- *Respond to national development priorities.*
- *Draw on a wide range of relevant, high quality evidence.*
- *Have a diverse knowledge community collaborating with all stakeholders.*
- *A diverse range of institutions are valued and adequately resourced.*
- *Ensure individuals can work and progress, regardless of gender or background.*

An equitable knowledge ecosystem is

- Able to respond rapidly to national development priorities (and not driven by external interests).
- Where decision makers can draw on a wide range of relevant, high quality evidence.
- Contains a diverse community of researchers and other knowledge-providers collaborating closely with policy makers and communities.
- Where different forms of knowledge are equally valued.
- A diverse range of institutions are valued and adequately resourced.
- Which enable individuals to work and learn and advance their careers, regardless of gender or background.

To establish an equitable knowledge ecosystem;

- Individuals need to have the skills, knowledge and confidence to produce, communicate and use research and knowledge, irrespective of their gender or social background.
- Organisations need to create an environment which enables individuals to work, learn and advance their careers, and facilitate engagement in wider institutions to raise their visibility and advance their missions
- And the system needs a diverse ecosystem of institutions, playing distinct and complementary roles.

Sources: <http://blog.inasp.info/equitable-research-system-bangladesh/>
<http://blog.inasp.info/needed-equitable-research-system-ethiopia/>
<http://blog.inasp.info/uganda-dialogue-event-enabling-equitable-research-system-communicue/>

“The results of household disease surveys informed processes of health service reform which contributed to a 43 and 46 per cent reduction in infant mortality between 2000 and 2003 in two districts in rural Tanzania”.



<https://www.idrc.ca/en/article/tanzanias-healthcare-breakthrough>

- I am not aware of any evaluations of knowledge ecosystems – equitable or otherwise.
- But there is lots of evidence that elements of what should be in them do deliver substantial benefits.
- For example the Tanzania Essential Health Improvement Programme explicitly combined national and local evidence when it designed its interventions
- Household disease prevalence surveys informed processes of health service reform which contributed to a 43 and 46 per cent reduction in infant mortality in two districts in rural Tanzania between 2000 and 2003.”

Further info: <https://www.idrc.ca/en/article/tanzanias-healthcare-breakthrough>



Australian Government
AusAID

AUSTRALIA-INDONESIA PARTNERSHIP FOR PRO-POOR POLICY:

THE KNOWLEDGE SECTOR INITIATIVE

Goal:

Indonesia has the capacity to develop effective and socially accountable policies that meet priority development needs

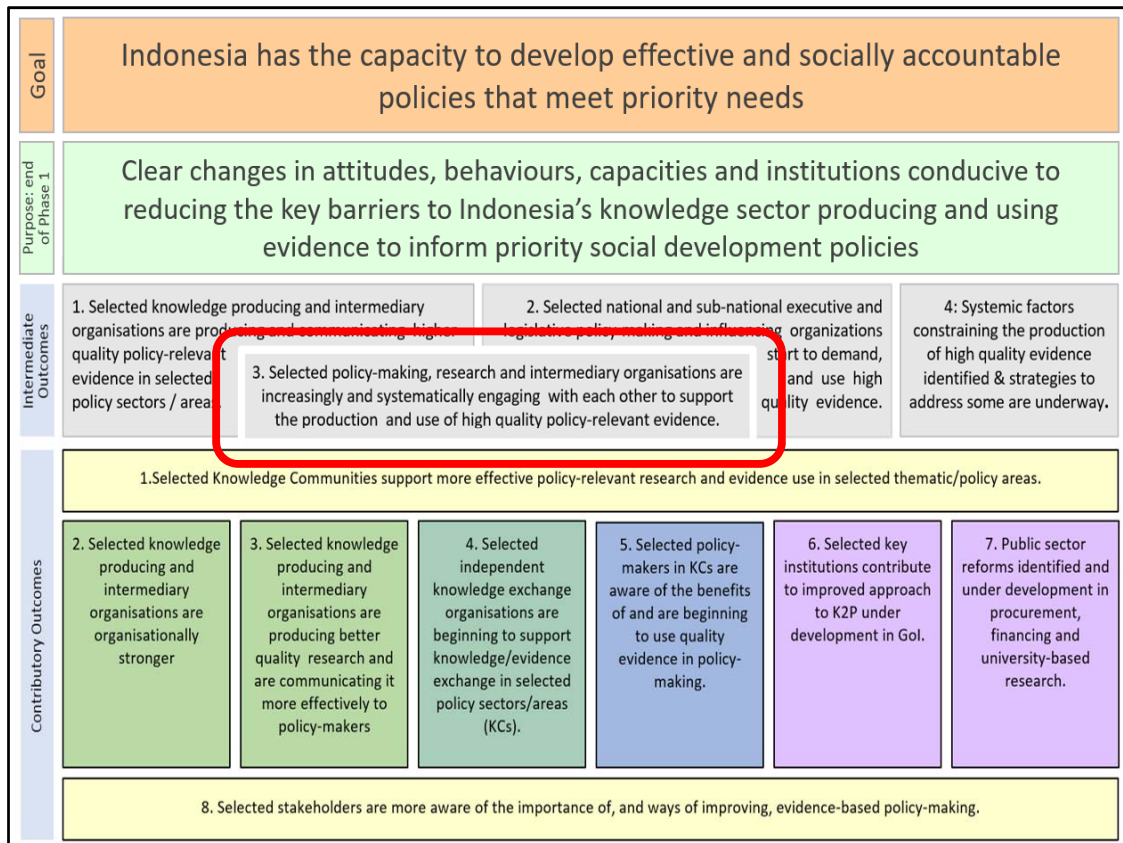
Purpose:

Indonesia's knowledge sector produces evidence to inform priority social development policies

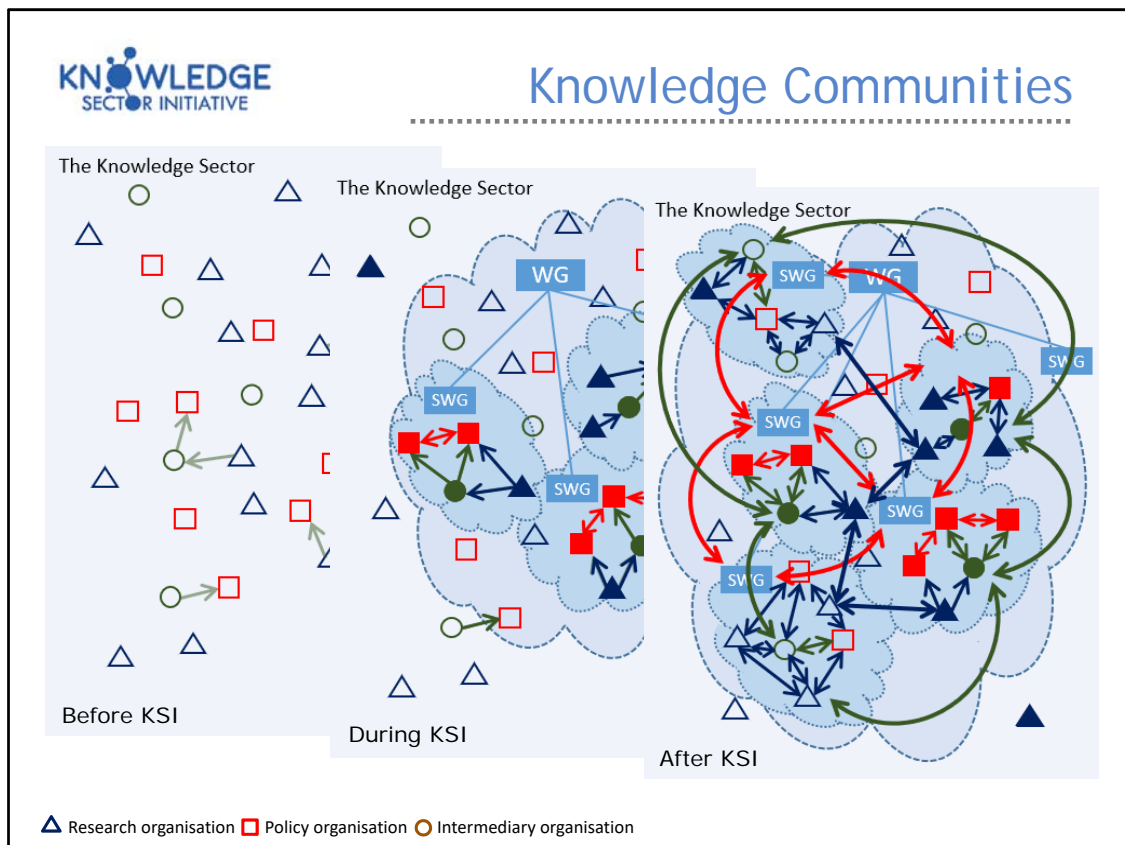
www.ksi-indonesia.org

- The Indonesia Knowledge Sector Initiative is the most ambitious programme in the world aiming to build equitable knowledge systems.
- Initially designed as a 15 year, AU\$500m programme it aimed to work systematically across the whole knowledge sector in Indonesia to contribute towards Indonesia having the capacity to develop effective and socially accountable policies that meet its priority development needs.
- The specific purpose was to ensure that Indonesia's knowledge sector produces evidence to inform priority social development policies.
- Like all programmes it is subject to changes in both donor and recipient country environments, and since it started there have been major shifts of policy in both Indonesia and Australia.
- But it has achieved a lot, and is now coming to the end of the first year of its second five-year phase.

Further info: www.ksi-Indonesia.org



- The Theory of Change (ToC) developed in phase one identified 4 intermediate outcomes: research organisation producing and communicating research better; government organisations better able to use research, research and government organisations collaborating better on key policy issues, and a more supportive environment for research production and use.
- The ToC identifies a number of specific contributory outcomes for stakeholders across the knowledge spectrum, but I'm going to focus on the central one: bringing researchers, intermediary and policy organisations together to work on specific policy issues.



- These were called “Knowledge Communities”.
- At the beginning of the project research organisations and policy organisations were not working together very much, and there were few organisations mediating the results of research to policy makers.
- In the first phase KSI identified, worked with, and then brought together the different stakeholders into working groups working on specific issues – like the development of the national development plan, and the working conditions of academics in universities.
- The policymakers started demanding more research, the research organisations started doing more useful research and communicating it better, and intermediary organisations and networks emerged to support them.
- The idea was that by working with each group separately to ensure they had the skills, knowledge and capacity to do their jobs better, and by bringing them together and facilitating interaction, KSI would leave behind a much richer ecosystem better able to help the government to address the key social and economic challenges facing the country.

Further info: <http://www.ksi-indonesia.org/en/news/detail/ksis-partner-provide-policy-advice-on-village-development>

Conclusions:

- It worked!
- Breadth of engagement important.
- The approach was not clear.
- Alignment with policy processes helped.
- Leadership and learning was key.

Recommendations for Phase 2:

- It should continue.
- Should be broader but more strategic.
- Needs clearer principles and purpose.
- Closer alignment with GoI policy processes.
- Flexible iterative approach.

KSI Performance Story
Interim Report October 2016



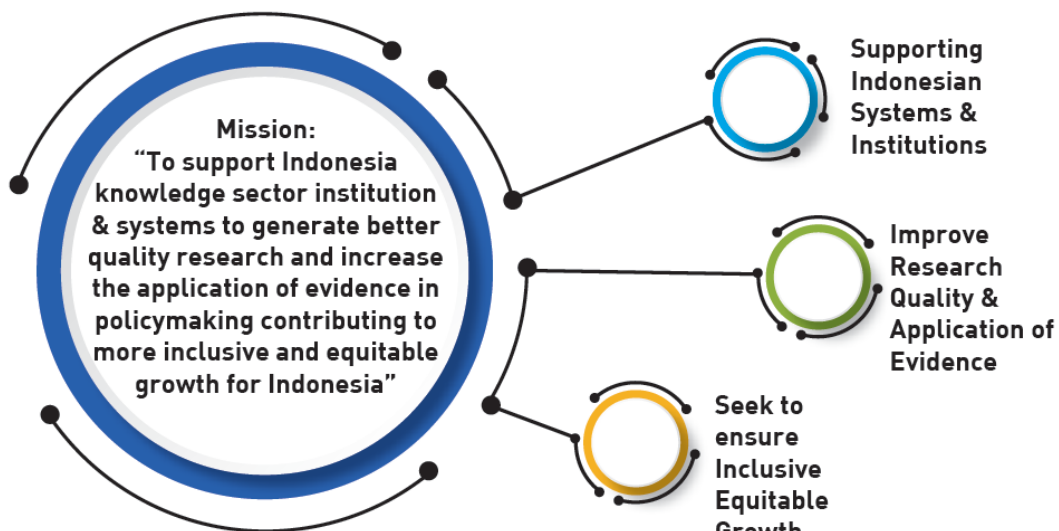
And the conclusions of a review at the end of phase one were:

- That it worked! KSI delivered tangible changes across the whole spectrum of stakeholders in the knowledge sector. But it took time for PRI and GoI partners to develop new strategies and skills, and new ways of working.
- It was important that it engaged widely so it could learn more about the knowledge sector and identify and build partnerships.
- The concept of increased use of research-based evidence in policy was clear for PRIs, but not for many government partners.
- KSI worked best when it brought together researchers and policy-makers to consider specific issues, for example around research procurement and university research.
- The evolution from an initial 'one size fits all' approach to a more tailored one worked much better. But leadership and learning were weak in Phase 1.

The review made several recommendations for Phase 2

- It should continue. The overall programme ToC is sound, but changes take time and a long-term timescale will be essential.
- Phase 2 should be broader but more strategic: Support to the PRIs should include a combination of core funding together with facilitation of collective action. KSI should learn more about and strengthen specific government knowledge processes.
- The clearer principles and purpose should be clearer and communicated better.
- Phase 2 should focus on the knowledge needs of the GoI policy cycle.
- It needs a more flexible and iterative approach with appropriate expert support and better internal learning systems.

Better Policies Better Lives™



- These have largely been implemented.
- The initiative now has a clearer purpose and structure, and is communicating to and engaging with stakeholders much better.
- And although the basic activities remain much the same, it is using a much simpler diagram to show what it is doing.

Further info: <https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/indonesia-knowledge-sector-initiative-phase-2-guiding-strategy.pdf>



1. Clearer research agendas in ministries, with funding for quality policy research;
2. Clearer incentives & career paths for university lecturers;
3. Increased interaction, knowledge sharing and collaboration among key players;
4. Quality data on government program performance is used in budgeting, planning and implementation;
5. Policy research organisations produce and communicate quality research

- The programme now has a much more integrated management system largely driven by the Indonesian Program Steering Committee.
- And it has five clear outcomes it hopes to achieve by the end of the second phase:
 1. Clearer and more coordinated research agendas in selected ministries, themes or regions, underpinned by funding mechanisms for quality policy research;
 2. Clearer incentives & career paths for university lecturers to produce quality policy research;
 3. Increased interaction, knowledge sharing and collaboration between researchers, policy analysts, policy-makers and other key players in the Knowledge Sector;
 4. Quality data on the performance and impact of development programs is integrated into planning, budgeting and ongoing implementation;
 5. Policy research organisations increasingly produce quality policy research, communicate it effectively, and collaborate as key players in Indonesia's knowledge sector

- Equitable knowledge ecosystems are essential for equitable development.
- There is evidence they can deliver substantial benefits.
- It is possible to invest in countries to build them.
- But it requires:
 - Substantial investment
 - A systematic approach
 - Local ownership
 - Flexible, adaptive approaches
 - Long term commitment

- Equitable knowledge ecosystems are essential for equitable development, so that high quality research-based and other forms of knowledge can be used to inform policies and programmes.
- There is evidence that using a combination of research-based and other forms of knowledge can deliver substantial benefits, as shown in the TEHIP example.
- The Knowledge Sector Initiative proves that it is possible for donors to work with national governments to establish systems which enable research organisations and policy organisations to collaborate more effectively.
- But it requires:
 - A substantial investment of time and money
 - A systematic approach working with all sections of the knowledge ecology or at least a thorough understanding of the knowledge ecology so that strategic investments can be made to alleviate the worst obstacles.
 - Local ownership of the process and the results to ensure it is culturally appropriate and well accepted – that may be even more important in countries with diverse cultures like New Zealand.
 - Flexible, adaptive approaches and being prepared to try things which might fail.
 - A long term commitment, probably at least 10 or 15 years!