

Better Policies Better Lives

A REVIEW OF THE INDONESIAN KNOWLEDGE SECTOR INITIATIVE'S SUPPORT TO 16 POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTES

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Ajoy Datta
Emma Piper
Rahmi Yunita



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Executive summary

This report reviews the effectiveness of the Knowledge Sector Initiative (KSI)'s support to 16 Policy Research Institutes (PRIs) over its two phases of operation, taking place between 2013 and 2022. The review focuses on four areas of support to PRIs: research quality; network and profile; engagement and influence and; financial sustainability. The review took place over four months between November 2021 and March 2022 and comprised the development of a 'results note' for each PRI drawing on a review of documentation, interviews with staff from every PRI and some interviews with policymakers. This report synthesises findings from the 16 results notes and (will) incorporate comments from three sense making sessions with staff from KSI, PRIs and DFAT.

Asked about the most noteworthy changes to have emerged from their engagement with KSI, most PRIs highlighted improved organisational capacity in the form of planning and management processes, staffing, organisational infrastructure and financial sustainability. Then came better profile amongst, engagement with and influence of stakeholders, followed by better research quality stemming from improved methods and better integration of Gender Equity, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI).

Research quality: by 2015, all PRIs conducted internal quality control processes, although the consistency and focus of such quality control and the involvement of external actors varied. By 2022, most PRIs met KSI's criteria for producing quality outputs for KSI funded work. At an organisational level, PRIs had a better understanding of how stakeholder involvement during research design could increase uptake and legitimacy and therefore research quality. PRIs overall improved their quality assurance (and research management) processes (including peer review). There appeared to be more dialogue amongst staff through for instance, regular internal seminars, the establishment of technical working groups, about research proposals, designs and preliminary findings, which had driven up their quality.

With regards gender, half of PRIs in 2015 had a basic understanding of the term and did not consider this during research unless the topic explicitly called them to do so, whilst the other half worked with vulnerable groups and were more aware of the issue. By 2022, almost all PRIs made improvements in relation to considering GEDSI throughout both KSI and non KSI funded research. Some PRIs developed a GEDSI sensitive framework to use throughout the research process, helping them to pay attention to the role and needs of marginalised groups. Some PRIs suggested they were looking to work on issues which more explicitly touched on GEDSI issues.

Networks and profile: in 2015, organisations generally considered themselves to be known and viewed positively among all stakeholders and considered at least some of their research products to be known and considered relevant and credible. Most PRIs said they tended to work/collaborate more frequently with CSOs and less so with policymaking institutions, and did so in a limited or sporadic way. By 2022, all PRIs said their reputation amongst stakeholders had improved whilst their networks and relationships with various stakeholders had both deepened and expanded. These included government, including central level agencies as well as Bappenas, research and academic circles (especially amongst university-based PRIs), as well as CSOs who were approaching PRIs for training in data and research management. PRIs seemed to have a better profile amongst and relationship with media outlets such as Kompas and

the Jakarta Post – being approached for comment and opinion and featured in articles, with PRIs less reluctant to engage. In a few cases, PRIs benefited from being recognised in their own right, in addition to their (previously more prominent) researchers or board members. Interestingly, some PRIs said that engagement with KSI had influenced a shift in their identity from a research organisation serving clients to one with the intention of influencing policy and practice.

Engagement and influence: in 2015, some PRIs integrated engagement with external actors into their research process. However, half PRIs had only begun to turn their attention to policy engagement and influence. Most PRIs suggested they could use more appropriate formats in their engagement with stakeholders. Engagement with stakeholders tended to be ad hoc, based on the initiative of specific individuals and not part of a plan unless funders made specific demands. Engagement was seen as consuming a lot of time and resource which some PRIs felt they had little of. Both policymakers (national and sub-national) and civil society sometimes or frequently used parts of organisations’ research results, but PRIs had few mechanisms to track research use.

By 2022, All PRIs said they took a more systematic and structured approach to engaging with their key stakeholders including policymakers. These involved researchers having more formal discussions early on in a research project about what they wanted to achieve, who they wanted to influence and how they would do so. PRIs now had more options (in terms of e.g communication outputs) to consider in engaging different stakeholders, beyond traditional research reports, supported by specialist communication staff who had been hired. Several PRIs said they were now able to track the impact of their policy engagement work to help account for resources but also help them to improve their approach. All PRIs shared examples of changes in policy that they believed they had contributed to. Most examples referred to changes in government regulation which they had advocated for or actually drafted themselves. This included collective efforts amongst PRIs through a KSI working group to enable government to procure multi-year research from NGOs.

Financial sustainability: in 2015, the majority of PRIs were predominantly or exclusively funded by donor organisations, although most received funding from a variety of different donors. Some PRIs said they did not need to write research proposals to secure funding and relied on their reputation amongst and relationships with funders to do so. On financial and operational management, PRIs had finance and operations systems that covered finance, procurement, asset management, and fraud prevention, which were (generally) applied consistently. Some PRIs said they had started to direct some of their funds into reserves or endowment funds, with one PRI saying they had invested this in government bonds.

By 2022, PRIs were thinking more seriously about their financial sustainability and the need to diversify funding sources. Many PRIs which had not already developed business units to generate additional income, did so. But it was unclear whether they brought in any significant new revenues. Some PRIs undertook more marketing/branding activities, whilst others were exploring possibilities from businesses and government through the Swakelola Type III mechanism.¹ Several PRIs suggested they had a better

¹ Swakelola Type III is a procurement mechanism which was established through Presidential Regulation 16/2018. This procurement mechanism allowed non-profit organisations, non-government think tanks and private universities to win Indonesian Government contracts, including to do policy research. For more information, see e.g. <https://www.ksi-indonesia.org/en/wawasan/detail/2521-swakelola-tipe-iii-to-build-sustainable-collaboration-between-government-and-csos>

understanding of their income and expenditure, which some were able to use to better price their research proposals. There seemed few discernible trends in the growth in the proportion of domestic funding and non-DFAT funding, with little correlation between such trends and the financial health of the PRI.

Adapting to COVID-19: some PRIs had their funding re-allocated away from research towards COVID-19 relief efforts, whilst in contrast, a small number of PRIs realised opportunities to make covid-19 and their impacts the focus of their research and secured funding to do so. Some PRIs delayed research given travel restrictions and limited capacity to conduct research online, coinciding with the pause of formal policy processes, which somewhat limited some PRIs' opportunities to engage with policy. Other PRIs, especially those familiar with digital platforms, embraced the challenge of conducting both their research and engagement entirely online (or telephonically). Many PRIs found that they had better and more access to stakeholders including policymakers with whom they had existing relationships, using platforms such as WhatsApp and Zoom. Many also found over time stakeholders were less likely to respond to invitations to engage and when they did, were often distracted particularly during longer conversations/meetings. With restrictions having eased, some PRIs have embraced hybrid forms of work, giving staff more flexibility especially in the context of long commute times in Jakarta.

Mediating factors: more than half the PRIs suggested that since Joko Widodo came to power in 2014, the government had been more open to inputs from civil society including research inputs. In some cases, this openness manifested itself in increased demand for expertise and advice from PRIs which could vary depending on the issue. The continued growth of online and social media provided plenty of channels for PRIs and their supporters to reach various stakeholders. However, about half the PRIs said they were in no position to control how and the extent to which their inputs were considered, used and/or applied, whilst several PRIs highlighted the challenges of tracing whether one's policy research had influenced change, due to the often complex nature and opacity of policy processes.

PRIs suggested that changes that emerged happened due to the commitment, desire, actions and relationships of specific people and groups of people in the organisation – founders, senior researchers, younger researchers, board members and others. Despite increased profile and recognition of PRIs being a key outcome of KSI's phase 2, a large number of PRIs suggested that it was also a pre-condition for the changes they experienced (especially in engaging with and influencing government). Furthermore, the propensity for PRIs to make progress in KSI's areas of interest appears to be dependent on the identity of the PRIs at the time of engagement with KSI and their openness towards adjusting their approach.

Effectiveness of KSI approaches and inputs

- PRIs praised KSI for providing at least 7-8 years of continuous support, which was rare amongst current research funders.
- PRIs would have preferred a continuation of core funding into phase 2 but welcomed the more collaborative approach between them and PRIs where KSI staff were seen as an 'equal partner' and a 'critical friend'.

- During the transition, communication from KSI was poor leaving PRIs uncertain about, for instance, the rationale behind the changes (in funding and approach) and what the implications might be for their respective organisations.
- A circular or mutually reinforcing relationship between all four outcome areas during phase 2: improvements in engagement and influence, network and profile, research quality and financial sustainability helped to multiply effects of KSI's support.
- The capacity of PRIs to sustain the changes they have achieved in each of the four areas of interest will be dependent on funders willingness to fund processes to ensure research quality and policy engagement and influence
- Most PRIs found the program logic, although a little 'painful' to understand, helped them to identify particular outcomes and tracking back, identify which stakeholders they needed to engage with and what outputs they needed to produce. Some PRIs suggested that reaching consensus between KSI and the PRI on a program logic was too time consuming. And a few PRIs suggested that KSI's interpretation of the program logic was too narrow, as it emphasised a focus on tangible changes such as regulations and technical guidance issued by national level government officials within the executive over more intangible changes amongst other stakeholders.

Facilitating PRI development beyond KSI

In conclusion, we suggest that PRIs can: 1) continue, and build on, the work initiated by KSI by e.g. developing the capacity of their researchers and addressing GEDSI in research as well as proactively engaging with key relevant stakeholders, monitoring the impact of research on policy and improving their financial practices; and 2) collaborate with one another by for instance maintaining the working group and alliances set up during KSI. We also suggest that funders can: 1) do more to acknowledge the complexity and nuance of change and change processes; 2) fund third parties to play a critical friend role in relation to PRIs and broker relationships between them and other key stakeholders including government and overseas researchers; and 3) better manage transitions that come with starting, evolving and ending capacity development programs.

1. Introduction

Background

The DFAT funded Knowledge Sector Initiative (KSI) was conceived of as a long-term program to help develop systems that would enhance the production and use of knowledge, especially research knowledge, during development planning processes and on priority policy issues in Indonesia. To achieve this, the program was designed to work simultaneously on four elements: i) improving knowledge production, ii) building demand and capacity to use knowledge among policymakers, iii) strengthening knowledge mediation, and iv) promoting an enabling environment for using knowledge in public policy. To help improve knowledge production, KSI supported 16 Policy Research Institutes (PRIs). This report reviews the effectiveness of this element.

Objectives, users and questions

Specifically, this report aims to do the following:

- Assess progress made by each PRI in the areas of research quality (including integration of GEDSI considerations), networks and profile, policy engagement and influence, and financial sustainability
- Assess KSI's contribution to progress made by PRIs.
- Assess factors supporting and inhibiting this progress and generate lessons learned
- Make recommendations to DFAT about future support to PRIs beyond KSI and provide insights on how PRIs might further strengthen their work.

The intended users and uses of the answers to these questions include the following:

- PRIs: to inform PRIs on their progress, share lessons and experiences across PRIs and provide insights on how PRIs' might further strengthen their work.
- KSI: to provide evidence of KSI's overall contribution to PRIs' work as the program completes its final phase.
- DFAT: to provide evidence on progress towards end-of-program outcomes related to PRIs and KSI's overall contribution as the program completes, as well as to inform their strategy for supporting PRIs beyond KSI.

The review is expected to answer the following questions grouped under four specific areas and those that are more general:

Table 1: Research questions

Area	Research Questions
Research quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How has the quality of PRI’s policy research changed? (including the extent to which GEDSI considerations are taken into account)? ● To what extent has the quality of PRIs research changed since their engagement with KSI?
Network and profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To what extent have PRIs built their networks and profile since their engagement with KSI?
Engagement and influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How do PRIs influence policy processes, what strategies do they use and how effective are these? ● How have PRIs’ policy engagement strategies changed since their engagement with KSI?
Financial sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What progress have PRIs made in improving their financial sustainability?
COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To what extent have PRIs adapted to the COVID-19 context in order to remain relevant and continue to play their role in influencing policy and promoting evidence-based policymaking? ● How has the COVID-19 context affected the financial sustainability of PRIs?
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What factors have influenced this progress (positive or negative)? ● To what extent and how has KSI contributed to this progress? ● What lessons can be learnt from facilitating progress amongst PRIs ● what recommendations can we make to DFAT regarding any future initiatives?

Methodology

The research took place between November 2021 and March 2022. We took a qualitative approach in undertaking this review and took the following steps:

- **Clarified key concepts.** We clarified key concepts and indicators that KSI has been working/measuring against in each of their areas of interest.
- **Drafted a ‘Result Note (RN)’ template.** We developed an outline for a short report that would be written up about each Policy Research Institute (PRI) which addressed each of the review questions.

- **Drafted a ‘Result Chart’ (RC) template for each PRI.** We produced a template that would be populated with raw data on an ongoing basis and that referred to each of the review questions for each PRI. This would then form the basis of the RN, above.
- **Reviewed key documentation.** We reviewed documents provided to us by KSI. General documents that were not specific to each PRI were reviewed using a key word search using the names of the PRIs. Documents included reviews of KSI’s first phase, analyses of PRIs after the initial phase by Julie Hind; PRI reports to KSI during phase 2, work on PRI’s financial sustainability, a rubric-based organisational assessment that SOLIDARITAS undertook in 2015, plus a further rubric-based reflection conducted in 2016 (again by SOLIDARITAS), amongst other documents. We also reviewed an ‘assessment of financial sustainability support to PRIs Knowledge Sector Initiative’ produced by Migunani. See Annex 1 for a full list of documents reviewed.
- **Conducted online interviews with current and former KSI staff and consultants.** These included the Strategic Partnership Grant team, who were responsible for managing the PRIs in phase 2, the former lead for KSI’s Knowledge Production and Intermediation (KPI) program, a consultant hired by KSI to inform phase 2 and a consultant involved in supporting the PRIs to develop the program logic which was used by KSI for research planning and proposals in phase 2.
- **Conducted online interviews with PRIs.** These involved conversations with a group of representatives from each of the 16 PRIs over a 2-hour period. Interviews were undertaken with a total of 59 representatives from across the 16 PRIs.
- **Contracted a consultant to interview policymakers.** This was to help verify claims made by PRIs especially about their engagement and influence. Five interviews with policymakers were conducted.
- **Drafted an RN for each PRI** (roughly six pages in length). This was based on documentation and interviews with KSI staff. The notes described PRI’s capacities in the four areas of interest, before their engagement with KSI, towards the end of their engagement with KSI and what factors contributed to changes in their capacities including the role of KSI. These can be found in annex 1.
- **Converted the RC into a RN for each PRI.** The raw data captured in the RCs were used to draft a RN.
- **Drafted a synthesis.** Using the 16 RNs as key inputs, we brought together data from the 16 PRIs to assess answers to key questions in the four areas of interest. A qualitative data analysis software package - Max QDA - was used to aid the process.
- **Conducted sense making sessions** with KSI, PRIs and DFAT to obtain validation of the key findings and elicit their inputs to recommendations.
- **Met regularly to manage the process.** Throughout the process, the review team met on a weekly basis to monitor progress, address problems and learn lessons, whilst they met with their KSI counterparts on a fortnightly basis with similar objectives.

Structure

The report is organised as follows:

- Section 2 summarises KSI's theory of change and how it has evolved over time
- Section 3 describes the challenges experienced in undertaking this review
- Section 4 describes the 16 PRIs that have received support from KSI
- Section 5 describes changes experienced by PRIs that they have said are most noteworthy
- Sections 6 to 9 describes PRI capacity at the start and end of KSI with regards to each of the four areas of interest research quality: research quality, network and profile, engagement and influence and financial sustainability. Each of these sections starts with a summary of PRI capacity as assessed near the start of KSI (in 2015), proceeds with a summary of changes experienced by PRIs (at the time of writing this review, 2022) and ends with an anonymised case study illustrating the changes experienced by a PRI
- Section 10 describes how PRIs adapted to COVID-19
- Section 11 describes key factors that have mediated changes
- Section 12 explores the effectiveness of KSI's approach and interventions
- Section 13 makes suggestions to DFAT and PRIs for facilitating PRI development beyond KSI

To protect the identities of specific PRIs, the data is anonymised.

2. KSI's Theory of Change

Support to improve knowledge production amongst domestic Indonesian research institutes was intended to challenge the dominance of foreign entities especially the World Bank in relation to the acquisition of knowledge by top level policymakers including those in the Ministries of Finance, Trade, Health and Education.

Support to Policy Research Institutes (PRIs) was managed in two phases: the first between 2013 and 2017 and the second from 2018 to 2022. During phase 1, supporting PRIs was by far the largest element of KSI. Organisations were selected and supported to improve their research quality, their policy engagement and their organisational capacity. Support was provided financially through core funding (which required PRIs to plan for and invoice their expenses) and technically through a suite of capacity building/training activities given to all 16 PRIs. KSI also set up 'knowledge communities' to enable PRIs to interact with policymakers and other key stakeholders on selected policy issues.

With DFAT asking for: more concrete results from the program; a phasing out of core funding and; a shift in focus overall towards the 'demand for evidence from policymakers' within the overall program, KSI changed its approach for the second phase.

PRIs were now required to:

- Demonstrate they were producing quality research policy and analysis
- Have strong and effective networks with policymakers, sponsors and stakeholders
- Effectively engage in and influence policy processes at national and sub-national level
- Put in place measures to strengthen their financial sustainability

These four elements are elaborated in the table below:

Table 2: Definition of key areas of interest

Research quality	The extent to which PRI research results in uptake, is relevant, has legitimacy, is peer reviewed and considers GEDSI issues.
Network and profile	The extent to which the PRI has established relationships with relevant policymakers, sponsors and stakeholders and collaborates with these individuals or organisations to exchange resources or knowledge or collaborate towards a common goal (including policy influence and GESI issues).

Engagement and influence	The extent to which PRIs have influenced changes in knowledge, attitudes, concepts and policy dialogue, as well as changes to guidelines, manuals, programs, projects, policies, regulations, budget allocations, transfers, budget expenditures, communications and information systems, M&E systems, assessment systems and practices, professional development systems and quality assurance systems of the Gol, as a result of research and engagement with policymakers.
Financial sustainability	The extent to which PRIs have diverse funding sources, conduct financial audits and have established systems to budget for research and track expenditure.

Financial support was provided through smaller strategic partnership grants which were awarded through a competitive process and tied to the production and communication of specific research outputs in priority areas and/or efforts to improve their financial viability. Note however that work to improve PRI's financial sustainability started toward the end of phase 2 which did not leave much time for this to influence PRI's capacity.

Technical support was provided in the shape of assistance in the area of M&E capacity and calculating the real costs of conducting research work. In addition, KSI organised a number of knowledge-sharing events including the KSIxchange, PRI and Directors meetings as well as a number of multi-stakeholder working groups.

Most KSI staff from phase 1 had left, whilst staff providing support to PRIs in phase 2 were fewer in number than they were during phase 1.

KSI had not planned to gradually phase out its support to PRIs through, for instance, a planned exit strategy.

3. Challenges in undertaking this review

There were no definitions of the four areas in the documents that the research team had access to. Whilst there was guidance of how specific outcomes, such as research quality would be measured (e.g. through peer review) within the PRI sub-strategy, there were no definitions of what "profile" or "engagement" meant. We subsequently put together definitions based on narratives in the KSI PRI sub-strategy and the performance management framework for the sub-strategy (see annex 1 for full set of documents reviewed).

KSI provided a set of documents to us to review. However, most of these documents were general and provided aggregated information about the PRIs. This meant there was limited information on each individual PRI and so made writing up each of the PRI specific RNs difficult.

The unit of focus for monitoring PRIs in phase 1 was the organisation and KSI focused on collecting information at the organisational level. We drew on the Rubric Based Organisational Assessment (RBOA) - a facilitated self-assessment conducted in the first half of 2015, to provide information of PRI capacity near the start of their engagement with KSI. This covers eight elements: vision and strategy; organisational management; technical management; HR management; research outputs; organisational reputation; impact on the policymaking process and; financial sustainability.

However, in phase 2, the unit of focus for monitoring PRIs was research projects. As a result, data collected by KSI during phase 2 did not provide information about the PRI as an organisation. Moreover, the data that we had access to was more procedurally oriented, with PRIs being asked whether they had peer reviewed their work or had considered GEDSI, rather than assessing the quality of the peer review and the subsequent quality of the research. We have therefore not been able to acquire like-for-like data points for, and make comparisons between, PRI engagement at the beginning versus at the end of KSI engagement.

There is a considerable degree of overlap between KSI's four areas of interest: research quality; network and profile; engagement and influence and; financial sustainability. For instance, research quality (element #1) which is defined as legitimacy, relevance and uptake overlaps with both network and profile (element #2) – defined as who the PRI interacts and collaborates with and how the PRI is perceived by stakeholders and – engagement and influence (element #3), which also includes uptake. To avoid repetition and ensure brevity of this document, we have subsequently made decisions to ensure clearer boundaries between each of the four areas of interest.

For the financial sustainability element, we relied on data from Migunani who supported KSI with this. However, not all PRIs provided complete data to Migunani. Moreover, the documents they provided did not contain full information about the purpose of their work and the data they used for their calculations.

We had originally planned to use the interviews with PRIs to validate the information from documentation. However, due to its limitations, interviews were used to collect predominantly primary data. As such questions were broad, covered a lot and were not focussed on validating information. The questions asked in the interviews with PRIs focussed on the changes that occurred since their engagement

with KSI. However, not all PRI representatives were able to identify specific changes with some focusing on results, and others focussing on how KSI supported them. The quality of some of the interviews were affected by the absence of key (senior) members of staff, poor internet connection, whether key informants had worked with the PRI since its engagement with KSI and the limited time we had with PRIs.

Finally, the majority of the data, both primary and secondary are based on the PRI's perceptions and there has been very little external validation. This is in part due to the type of monitoring data collected by KSI, which was based on PRI inputs and the limited time and resources available for this project.

4. The 16 Policy Research Institutes

Before we provide a baseline for the changes that PRIs have experienced, we describe the PRIs that KSI provided support to.

Five of the 16 PRIs (IRE, AKATIGA, SurveyMETER, Seknas FITRA and Puskapol-UI, whose staff left and established CWI in 2017, see below) were partners of the embryonic version of KSI, the KS (Knowledge Sector) program that ran from 2010-2013. These transitioned onto KSI in 2014 whilst 11 others were selected and recruited into the initiative at the same time.

Five of the 16 PRIs were founded before Reformasi (before the fall of the Suharto-led regime in 1997), whilst 11 were founded afterwards. The oldest PRI was CSIS which was founded in 1971, whilst the newest was CWI founded in 2017 (whose founding members came from a former KSI supported PRI, Puskapol-UI).

Twelve of the PRIs are non-profit NGOs (some of which are registered as an association, whilst others are registered as a foundation), three are university-based institutes, whilst one is a secretariat operating on behalf of a network of organisations. All PRIs are based in West and Central Java. 11 of the PRIs are based in Jakarta, three in Yogyakarta, one in Bandung and one in Bogor.

Before engaging with KSI, a small number of PRIs saw themselves as activist organisations using research as a resource, whilst most saw themselves as primarily a research organisation serving the needs of clients or those of academic audiences.

Regarding their thematic focus, most PRIs focus on multiple issues and policy areas (covering social and economic issues), some focus on particular processes such as legislative procedures and budget transparency, one focuses on human rights, whilst one focuses on a single issue (HIV&AIDS).

The table below outlines the number of staff PRI has. Six of the KSI-supported PRIs have staff ranging between 11 and 20. CSIS and SMERU are by far the two largest PRIs with 58 and 94 staff respectively.

Staff numbers	PRI
0-10	KPPOD
11-20	IRE, Seknas Fitra, Article 33, SAINS, CWI, PUSAD
21-30	Akatiga, ELSAM, PSKH, PPH Atma Jaya
31-40	PPIM, SurveyMeter
41+	CSIS (58 staff), SMERU (94 staff)

5. Most noteworthy changes

When PRI representatives were asked what the most significant changes to result from KSI engagement, they said the following in order of importance:

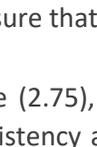
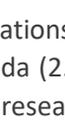
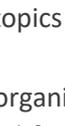
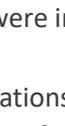
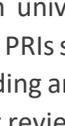
- **Better organisational capacity:** PRIs said they had benefited from improved organisational development, including a better organisational structure, the introduction of strategic planning practices, improved management processes, standard operating procedures, organisational infrastructure, financial sustainability and capacity of researchers, especially younger researchers. This was the focus of the first phase of KSI, with some PRIs suggesting that this laid the foundation for improvements in research quality and engagement with policymakers and other stakeholders. PRIs suggested KSI's focus on capacity development made them unique amongst research funders.
- **Better profile amongst, engagement with and influence of stakeholders:** several PRIs suggested they had a better orientation towards policy and stakeholder engagement, a more systematic approach to engaging with stakeholders, with one PRI saying they had set up an advocacy unit. In one case, this involved a shift in identity from being an organisation undertaking research for clients to an organisation striving to influence policy and practice. Some PRIs are seen as more credible amongst policymakers, experienced greater visibility in public discourse and benefitted from new and broader networks.
- **Better research:** this included better processes to identify research priorities, which saw some PRIs move into new research areas and setting up new organisational structures, greater discipline in conducting peer review, better integrating GEDSI issues and producing higher quality outputs.

6. Research quality

Capacity near the start

Regarding research quality, the RBOA referred to three elements that are relevant: 1) the implementation of the research agenda; 2) quality assurance; and 3) relevance of research for policy. The table below provides a graphic of the results by element. The size of the circles represents the proportion of PRIs that rated themselves weak, fair, good or very good. In the text below, we refer to average scores where 1 is weak and 4 is very good.

Table 3: Research quality near the start of KSI

	Aspect	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good
Quality and relevance of research	Implementation of Research Agenda	Null	 2	 5	 1
	Quality Assurance	Null	 4	 3	 2
	Relevance of Research for Policy	Null	 3	 4	 2
Management	Gender	Null	 1	 3	 4

Note: The numbers in the table are approximations of the sizes of the circles, graded from 1 to 5. They present an order of magnitude, not necessarily a precise measurement.

Across these three elements, organisations rated themselves on average 2.88. With regard to the implementation of their research agenda (2.94), most organisations had processes for translating their research agendas into more specific research plans or proposals as well as for reviewing external proposals and requests to ensure that topics were in line with research themes or strategic priorities.

In terms of quality assurance (2.75), organisations varied. All PRIs conducted internal quality control processes, although the consistency and focus of such quality control and the involvement of external actors varied. Some PRIs, especially those based in universities, had established and were following relevant standard operating procedures (SOPs). Some PRIs suggested quality was more likely to be assured (say, through peer review) if they had earmarked funding and time. If funders requested peer review, PRIs would be able to build in time and resources for peer review into their research design. Research reports were more likely to undergo quality assurance than research proposals. Quality assurance was harder to undertake if content was considered sensitive and confidential.

In terms of the policy relevance of the research (2.94), the organisations that rated themselves good or very good generally considered their research as relevant due to the clear recommendations they made.

Several organisations emphasised mechanisms that allowed policymakers to engage directly with their research, as well as producing research on a timely basis. However, none of the 16 partner organisations cited any objective assessments about the relevance of their research, and four organisations commented specifically on the lack of an objective basis for assessing the relevance of their research (These paragraphs draw from Datta, 2016).

PRIs scored themselves relatively highly in relation to gender at an organisational level. However, in relation to Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI), based on interviews with PRIs undertaken for this review, we found about half of PRIs had a basic understanding of the term and did not consider this during research unless the topic explicitly called them to do so. The other half of PRIs, we found, tended to work on issues such as religious freedoms, human rights, sexual health which affected vulnerable, underserved and/or marginalised groups such as young people, people with disabilities and women amongst others and were therefore more conscious of the issue.

Changes toward the end

In most cases, PRIs met KSI's criteria for producing quality outputs in relation to KSI funded research. In some cases, KSI suggested there was room for improvement. At an organisational level, PRIs had a better understanding of how stakeholder involvement during research design could increase uptake and legitimacy and therefore research quality.

Those PRIs which said they had good quality assurance (and research management) processes (including peer review) during the RBOA were maintaining them, whilst those which did not, had improved them. Those PRIs which had formal research processes in place were better at putting them into practice more consistently and systematically across all projects.

There appeared to be more dialogue amongst staff through for instance, regular internal seminars, the establishment of technical working groups, about research proposals, designs and preliminary findings, which had driven up their quality. This went hand in hand with improvements in the technical capacities of (research) staff through e.g. recruitment, mentorship and training.

One PRI said that they found it hard to objectively measure the quality of their research, but that a proxy for this could be interest from stakeholders and funders, which had both increased in their case. Another PRI said that an increased emphasis on quality meant that in certain scenarios, they were more likely to collect their own data rather than rely on government data (if resources allowed). The increased quality of research was evidenced by relatively junior staff from one non-profit PRI publishing in an international journal in a context where papers and articles would be authored by more senior staff.

In undertaking research more robustly, some PRIs deepened their understanding of their research areas and were better able to address key policy challenges of their clients and potential users. Other PRIs expanded their research portfolio, and/or specialised in more specific areas such as the digital economy and people with disabilities.

Almost all PRIs made improvements in relation to considering GEDSI throughout both KSI and non-KSI funded research. Some PRIs developed a GEDSI-sensitive framework to use throughout the research process, helping them to pay attention to the role and needs of marginalised groups. This included considering how researchers could better engage with marginalised groups, by for instance, hiring sign language interpreters, ensuring GEDSI was clearly addressed in written outputs, ensuring relevant recommendations were made and ensuring mixed gender panels in their engagement work.

Some PRIs suggested they were seeking to work on issues which more explicitly touched on GEDSI issues. However, in one case, although awareness and commitment were high, technical capacity was insufficient to make practical improvements. This contrasted with another case where a PRI had exceeded KSI's expectations and started undertaking intersectionality analysis – exploring how different factors such as gender, age, class and other characteristics intersected to shape a person's lived experience.

Case study: improving research in a well-established PRI

PRI 1 is an established PRI and already had a reputation as one of the top think tanks in Indonesia prior to joining the KSI program. Despite this, PRI 1 was still able to improve areas of research quality during the KSI program.

In the early days of KSI, PRI 1 did not have any specific guidance for conducting quality assurance for the research process and quality assurance tended to depend on donor requests and the availability of funds. In addition, PRI 1 did not have specific target audiences for their research results and advocacy was not designed from the outset of research.

According to PRI 1, over the years since KSI began, their study themes have become more specific, in part as a result of the strategic planning process they conducted with support from KSI. The PRI also believes their research quality has improved: there is now greater discussion of research proposals among staff and staff members are now more disciplined at using appropriate methods to carry out policy research. In addition, their research management has improved, ensuring their new research builds on their previous work. These practices have been applied to other, non-KSI research projects too.

By providing continuous funding for seven years, KSI has supported PRI 1 to address important, strategic issues, as well as build the capacity of new and junior researchers by providing them with regular research experience. According to PRI 1, this has been one of the biggest areas of benefit from the KSI program. The use of tools such as program logic and the 'critical friend' approach taken by KSI when discussing the PRIs plans and progress, encouraged internal discussions and helped increase the quality of PRI 1's research. By going through this process repeatedly over the years, PRI 1 believes that many of these processes, including incorporating GEDSI issues into research, have become organisational practice, especially for younger researchers.

7. Network and profile

Capacity near the start

Regarding the network and profile of PRIs, the RBOA referred to five elements that are relevant: organisational reputation amongst policymakers; organisational reputation amongst NGO stakeholders, organisational reputation amongst academia, collaboration with policy institutions and collaboration with NGOs. Table 2 below provides a graphic of the results by element. The size of the circles represents the proportion of PRIs that rated themselves weak, fair, good or very good. In the text below, we refer to average scores where 1 is weak and 4 is very good.

Table 4: Network and profile near the start of KSI

Aspect	Weak (1)	Fair (2)	Good (3)	Very good (4)	No response
Organisational reputation among Policymakers	 1	 3	 4	Null	 2
Organisational reputation among Non-Government Stakeholders	Null	 3	 4	 2	 1
Organisational reputation among Academic Actors	 1	 3	 4	 1	Null
Collaboration with Policy Institutions	Null	 4	 3	 2	Null
Collaboration with Non-government Organisations	 1	 2	 3	 3	 2

Note: The numbers in the table are approximations of the sizes of the circles, graded from 1 to 5. They present an order of magnitude, not necessarily a precise measurement.

On organisational reputation, organisations on average scored themselves 2.59 across all three types of actors, with PRIs perceiving themselves to have a slightly better reputation amongst NGOs. Organisations generally considered themselves to be known and viewed positively among all stakeholders and considered at least some of their research products to be known and considered relevant and credible.

In terms of collaborating with policy-making institutions, organisations rated themselves 2.63 on average. Most organisations rated themselves fair, tended to work with fewer policy-making institutions, and did so in a limited or sporadic way. In terms of collaborating with CSOs, organisations rated themselves on average 2.84. Most organisations frequently and actively collaborated with CSOs.

To support these claims, several PRIs said they were invited by government institutions (within the executive, legislature and judiciary) both at national and sub-national level to participate in planning and policymaking processes, or were sent requests for data and information, whilst other PRIs said that conversely, policymakers attended PRI organised events such as conferences and seminars. A small number of PRIs were well-known regionally and internationally. Finally, some PRIs suggested that they had weak ties to and subsequently a poor reputation amongst mainstream media houses.

Changes toward the end

In most cases, PRIs met KSI's criteria for producing quality outputs in relation to KSI funded research. In some cases, KSI suggested there was room for improvement. At an organisational level, PRIs had a better understanding of how stakeholder involvement during research design could increase uptake and legitimacy and therefore research quality.

All PRIs said their reputation amongst stakeholders had improved whilst their networks and relationships with various stakeholders had both deepened and expanded. Amongst government, these included primarily central level agencies but also local level counterparts (and their directorates) including the planning agency, Bappenas, which have increasingly asked PRIs for inputs. For instance, one PRI was recognized by a government agency as a centre of excellence in the field of social science whilst another was approached by Bappenas to be a partner in the development of a national strategy. Conversely government officials were more open and accessible to PRI's invitations and requests. However, one PRI said they were reluctant to be used instrumentally by government (to for instance legitimate policy) and had on occasion declined invitations to attend events.

Some PRIs, especially those that were university-based had expanded their networks within research and academic circles. Other PRIs said they were being approached by other KSI supported PRIs and CSOs to provide training in e.g. data and research management. PRIs seemed to have a better profile and relationship with specific media houses (such as Kompas and the Jakarta Post) as some were approached for comment and opinion and featured in articles, with PRIs less reluctant to engage. In the past, some PRIs would be reluctant to engage with the media for fear of being misinterpreted/misquoted. Some PRIs said being associated with KSI and DFAT had enabled them to appear more credible amongst, and realise/secure opportunities from, other funders. This was illustrated when one PRI said that they had been invited to be part of a large UNDP funded project to address extremism and radicalisation across Indonesia.

Examples of PRIs enhanced profile were plentiful. One PRI was asked by a foreign embassy to host a conference on a key issue. A small number of PRIs said they were increasingly being approached by private and international entities such as Google and Facebook. Another PRI initiated relations with international agencies such as the Asian Development Bank and the World Health Organisation in Jakarta. And some PRIs benefited from having a better profile regionally and internationally. For instance, one PRI signed a formal agreement to work with EuroCham, the European Chamber of Commerce in Singapore, whilst others forged relationships with 'international' research organisations.

In a few cases, PRIs benefited from being recognised as an institution in their own right, in addition to their (previously more prominent) researchers or board members. Some PRIs said that engagement with KSI had influenced a shift in their identity – how they perceived themselves and how others did so. Some PRIs said they had broadened the area of expertise they were known for amongst their stakeholders. One PRI said they had moved from being a ‘watchdog’ to taking a more critical approach, another described a shift from being an activist NGO to being a more ‘balanced’ partner, yet another described a change from being a local NGO to being a key national NGO and finally, one that described a move from being perceived as close to business to now being perceived as a more independent minded and credible research institution. However, there were some PRIs which some in government felt that from their perspective, had not made that shift from activist to partner. Government officials welcomed a more collaborative/appreciative approach as opposed to one that was more confrontational.

Case study: increased network & profile of a new PRI

PRI 2 is a newly established organisation and as a result, had no reputation beyond that of individual researchers when they joined the KSI program. As their area of research expanded into other areas related to women’s representation, so did the networks of PRI 2. Prior to working with KSI, their main network was political parties, now their relationships included CSOs, membership based organisations and new government units.

This network developed as a result of strong research management, including through the stakeholder mapping that PRI 2 conducted as part of the research planning process. The PRI’s strong research management influenced their legitimacy and reputation, which contributed to expanding their network. For example, the Netherlands Embassy was first exposed to PRI 2 at an event where PRI 2 was presenting their research findings. As a result of this new connection and the standard of research that PRI 2 produced, the Netherlands Embassy went on to provide the PRI with research funding.

Although the organisation is still in its infancy, PRI 2 has also gone on to partner with the University of Birmingham and their work with KSI has led to a project with INOVASI, a DFAT education project. PRI 2 also contributed to the insertion of GESI perspectives in the development of grant guidelines from the former Ministry of Research and Higher Education. Further evidence of their growing profile is that the Ministry of the Empowerment of State Apparatus was willing to provide introductory remarks for one of PRI 2’s publications as well as be present in the discussion of their research findings. PRI 2 was also trusted by Bappenas to take part in the dissemination of the revision of Indonesia Democracy Index (IDI), a role that the PRI was selected for thanks to their rising profile.

8. Engagement and influence

Capacity near the start

Regarding PRI's engagement with and influence of stakeholders, the RBOA referred to five elements that are relevant: policy engagement planning, appropriateness for target audience, publication of research products, use of research by policymakers and use of research by NGO stakeholders.

Table 5: Engagement and influence near the start of KSI

Aspect	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	No response
Policy Engagement Planning	 2	 3	 3	 2	 1
Appropriateness for Target Audience	Null	 5	 3	 2	Null
Publication of Research Products	 1	 4	 4	 2	Null
Use of Research by Policymakers	 2	 3	 4	 1	 2
Use of Research by Non-government Stakeholders	 2	 3	 3	 2	 2

Note: The numbers in the table are approximations of the sizes of the circles, graded from 1 to 5. They present an order of magnitude, not necessarily a precise measurement.

Organisations on average scored themselves 2.6 in relation to policy engagement planning, 2.5 on appropriateness of research products for the needs of the target audience and 2.63 in terms of publication of research products

On policy engagement planning, the organisations that rated themselves very good or good integrated engagement with external actors into their research process. However, the seven organisations which rated themselves as fair or weak had only recently begun to turn their attention to policy influencing.

On the extent to which research products were appropriate for the needs of target audiences, 10 of the 16 organisations rated themselves as fair, indicating room for improvement through, for example, using more appropriate formats. No organisation cited any form of structured feedback from users and only one organisation cited an opinion from a third party.

Regarding the publication of research results, nine of the 16 organisations assessed themselves as frequently publishing their research through a variety of channels, including mass and social media, as well as academic journals.

Engagement with stakeholders tended to be ad hoc, based on the initiative of specific individuals and not part of a plan unless funders made specific demands. Engagement was seen as time and resource intensive which some PRIs felt they had little of. A small number of PRIs were familiar with stakeholder mapping tools but tended not to use them to facilitate their thinking. Some PRIs felt the lack of thinking resulted in missed opportunities to have influence. A lot of PRIs were more comfortable sharing their findings with NGO stakeholders, less so with policymakers. Several PRIs suggested they weren't sure what sort of outputs they should produce to engage with policymakers in particular. Crucially, a lot of PRIs felt that their primary task was not necessarily to influence domestic policy directly but to provide their client or funder with a quality piece of research: some PRIs did not see themselves as a policy research organisation, but merely a research organisation.

In terms of research use by both policymakers and civil society stakeholders, organisations scored themselves on average 2.43 and 2.5 respectively. Both policymakers (national and sub-national) and civil society sometimes or frequently used parts of organisations' research results. For instance, one PRI said their research had been used by Bappenas in the formulation of the National Development Plan, another said their recommendations had been taken up (separately) by the Supreme Court and the National Parliament, whilst yet another said their research triggered public debate.

However, as mentioned earlier, PRIs tended not to have methods to document and learn from their engagement with and influence of policy and practice. The examples cited tended to be anecdotal. No organisation cited structured data on how it was perceived by external actors, either recorded directly from users or compiled from the broader population of relevant stakeholders. And the extent to which organisations were asked/invited to participate in policy events, or their research was requested or accessed, was generally not systematically recorded.

Capacity toward the end

All PRIs said they took a more systematic and structured approach to engaging with their key stakeholders including policymakers. This involved researchers having more formal discussions early on in a research project about what they wanted to achieve, who they wanted to influence and how they would do so. In some cases, this represented a move towards a more democratic way of thinking about these issues and away from this being done by individuals and pairs in informal spaces. Some PRIs used stakeholder mapping exercises to facilitate their thinking. Several PRIs mentioned documenting their thinking in the form of a policy engagement or communications plans, whilst a smaller number described institutionalising this through Standard Operating Procedures.

PRIs were more clear on what they wanted to influence and why – for instance, whether it be high-level regulations, operational regulations, national plans, medium plans or other key instruments. Several PRIs mentioned inviting stakeholders to engage with them from the very start – the design of the research, to improve uptake and legitimacy. One PRI mentioned forming a working group to facilitate engagement.

PRIs now had more options (in terms of e.g. communication outputs) to consider in engaging different stakeholders, beyond traditional research reports. Several PRIs mentioned communicating findings in simpler language (e.g. in the form of a policy brief), in shorter formats (such as opinion pieces) and using more creative channels to engage stakeholders including infographics and videoclips on Facebook and YouTube. More broadly, a lot of PRIs suggested they were more opportunistic – ready to influence with key messages if the occasion called for it. Several PRIs suggested they hired specialist communication staff to help develop a range of outputs and provided incentives for researchers to write/produce a broader range of outputs

One PRI suggested they took a more constructive approach to engaging with government officials by seeing them as ‘partners’, being ‘willing and able to engage in dialogue’, ‘being ready with data’ and ‘maintaining trust’. Another PRI suggested that good research wasn’t enough, but that they needed to better understand the needs of policymakers. PRIs had in some cases facilitated dialogue between actors who would not have otherwise engaged with each other – becoming somewhat of a broker or mediator.

PRIs were not only influencing policy documents but being asked to draft them. Whilst this was a considerable achievement, drafting policy could also limit one’s objectivity and ability to provide critical feedback.

Several PRIs said they were now able to track the impact of their policy engagement work to help account for resources but also help them to improve their approach. One PRI however, said they were still struggling to do so. All PRIs shared examples of changes in policy that they believed they had contributed to. Most examples referred to changes in government regulation which they had advocated for or actually drafted themselves. These include:

- Promoting the use of Swakelola Type III funding mechanism
- Facilitating the development of the Ministerial Decree on National Competency Standards for Policy Analysts and the National Qualification Framework for Policy Analysts
- Recommendation to develop an omnibus law to simplify and clarify regulations on business licencing which was followed by an announcement by the president to develop such a law
- Drafting guidelines about sub-district borders which was approved by the Assistant Deputy of Strategic Special Locations
- Producing guidelines for the management of mental health services in Jakarta
- A circular letter produced by the National Police with a focus on hate speech
- Drafting guidelines for the sub-national public service agency (BLUD) which was adopted entirely by MoHA
- Successfully advocating for the inclusion of regulatory reform in the 2020 – 2024 RPJMN (Medium-Term Development Plan)
- Successfully advocating for inclusion of improvements to the implementation of the village law in the 2020-2024 RPJMN.

Some PRIs worked together through the KSI working group on research and higher education to advocate for the revision of regulation to include provisions allowing non-government organisations to be contracted by the government under the self-managed procurement (Swakelola Type III) mechanism.

Some PRIs had provided support to government in other ways including:

- Supporting national level agencies to understand the context at a sub-national level
- The development of a district-level yellow pages of CSOs to support district-level government offices in their procurement processes
- Undertaking an independent assessment for the Ministry of Education and Vice President's Office of the number of teachers that government needed to hire. These offices used that figure to in turn persuade the Ministry of Finance which accepted this figure
- Delivery of peacebuilding training to the members of to the Religious Harmony Forum (FKUB)

One PRI helped to promote change at a local level - supporting communities to identify stunting, their causes and how to tackle them as well as supporting district-level health centres to develop appropriate strategies including raising awareness amongst key groups (mothers of young children and pregnant women).

One PRI said engaging with policy through influence and advocacy work gave them a great sense of satisfaction. But engaging stakeholders was resource intensive. Whilst KSI provided resources for PRIs to undertake engagement with their funded research, other clients and funders tended not to, limiting the 'multiplier effect'.

Case study: improved policy engagement and influence of a regionally based PRI

PRI 3 has an NGO background and changed strategic direction to become a think tank just before the KSI program began. This shift was somewhat hampered by: 1) the stigma from NGOs towards organisations who work closely with the government (as some perceive that this compromises an NGO's integrity) and 2) this PRI being based outside of the capital where it does not enjoy the same access to national policymakers as other organisations that are located in Jakarta.

PRI 3's growing influence on policy is strongly tied to its growing expertise in its research focus on village reform. Thanks to PRI 3's reputation related to promoting Village Law and contributing to the development of Village Law implementing regulations, PRI 3 already has a strong position and good relationship with national and local governments. KSI funding provided PRI 3 with more space to address the knowledge to policy problems in their sectoral work. For example, while support from DFAT governance program KOMPAK enabled PRI 3 to influence policy outcomes with the Ministry of Village Development, KSI support has enabled PRI 3 to identify the key policy challenges and design research activities to address these problems. As KSI observed, core funding has also enabled PRI 3 to continue their collaborative experimental research with some sub-national governments and village governments, enabling them to engage with local governments and influence local policymaking.

This multi-level policy advocacy approach has resulted in numerous successful policy changes, including the inclusion of PRI 3's inputs in the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN 2020 – 2025) through their work with Bappenas, as well as their contribution to the development of district and village regulations, engaging both local government as well as community groups in the policymaking process. This policy engagement process with national government was made easier for PRI 3 during the pandemic, as online meetings became the norm and PRI 3 no longer had the disadvantage of being based outside of the capital. Having previously been known as a regional NGO, PRI 3 can now boast an array of successful policy engagement activities across all levels of government.

9. Financial sustainability

Capacity near the start

Regarding financial sustainability, the RBOA referred to two elements that are relevant: 1) financial sustainability; and 2) financial and operational management. Table 3 below provides a graphic of the results by element. The size of the circles represents the proportion of PRIs that rated themselves weak, fair, good or very good. In the text below, we refer to average scores where 1 is weak and 4 is very good.

Table 6: Financial sustainability near the start of KSI

Aspect	Weak	Fair	Good	Very Good	No response
Financial Sustainability	Null	 4	 4	 1	 2
Financial & Operational Management	 1	 4	 4	 3	Null

Note: The numbers in the table are approximations of the sizes of the circles, graded from 1 to 5. They present an order of magnitude, not necessarily a precise measurement.

Organisations scored an average of 2.64 here. The majority were predominantly or exclusively funded by donor organisations, although most received funding from a variety of different donors. There were two exceptions to this: a PRI which provided research services to a range of clients and a university-based research institute which felt that the university would provide them with funds to do research that was important. Some PRIs said they had not needed to write research proposals to secure funding and relied on their reputation amongst and relationships with funders to do so. One PRI however said they were increasingly applying for funds through formal tenders. Some PRIs had expressed concerns that they relied exclusively on project income to fund operational expenses and that existing funding streams had, or would soon, decrease. Although some organisations set up business units to provide additional income (through e.g. book sales, training courses and consultancy services) they provided only small amounts in comparison to donor-funded projects or were unsuccessful. Nine organisations reported that the typical duration of funding was between one and two years. Two organisations reported funding duration of less than one year, while two organisations reported funding duration of more than two years.

On financial and operational management, PRIs had finance and operations systems that covered finance, procurement, asset management, and fraud prevention, which were (generally) applied consistently. However, some PRIs cited simplistic financial systems, some cited issues with the quality of procedures for procurement and asset management and some cited the lack of an explicit policy regarding fraud prevention. Interestingly three of the four university-based PRIs² used systems that were linked to the university, which varied in strength and were subject to financial oversight from them including in the

² One of the university-based PRIs was Puskapol UI, whose staff left and established CWI in 2017 - a non-profit NGO.

form of financial audits. Some PRIs said they had started to direct some of their funds into reserves or endowment funds, with one PRI saying they had invested this in government bonds.

Capacity toward the end

Migunani (2022) find that revenues amongst the ten PRIs they studied between 2015 and 2021 on the whole increased. However, revenue growth amongst some PRIs was hampered by COVID-19 whilst it was at times unsteady. Most of the PRIs revenue growth could be attributed to growth in domestic revenues. In all ten PRIs assessed, Migunani found that non-DFAT revenue increased between 2015 and 2021, suggesting that PRIs were becoming less dependent on DFAT funding. Furthermore eight out of 10 PRIs had a positive average operating reserve ratio, suggesting that PRIs had set aside funding for unexpected situations.

Engagement with KSI's investment component led to PRIs thinking more seriously about their financial sustainability and the need to diversify their income and mobilise more resources. Specifically PRIs undertook donor and client mapping and approached non-traditional funders such as businesses and private sector entities which had set aside research funds as part of their corporate social responsibility. One PRI said they saw the Swakelola Type III mechanism, as a promising channel to secure funds, although there were still concerns related to sufficiency of budgets and government awareness of the mechanism. Some PRIs had marketed and branded themselves more effectively, digitised their work as well as improved their capacity to write more cogent proposals (through the recruitment of researchers).

Several PRIs described examples of having actually secured relatively more funding from non-traditional sources. For instance, several PRIs said they had secured funds through the Swakelola Type III mechanism, a few said they had been successful in securing funding from non-DFAT foreign sources. One PRI said they were sourcing funding from local government and one had secured funding from several large companies, However, one PRI brought up the issue of absorptive capacity, saying that whilst they had secured a large amount of funding, they questioned whether they would have the capacity to manage the funds and deliver on their tasks. This brings us to the issue of financial management.

Migunani suggests that eight out of ten PRIs developed better financial practices and improved their skills in undertaking financial analysis. Several PRIs suggested they were better able to understand how much and where their income was being generated and what costs they were incurring in their work, aided by tools such as a financial dashboard, organisational budgets and better financial information and reporting. Importantly some PRIs said they were better able to turn this information into realistically priced research proposals to potential funders, which for instance, covered both direct as well as indirect costs. Some PRIs said that having better financial information helped them to make better decisions and were better informed when developing organisational and financial plans and strategies, whilst they were also better able to meet funder budgeting and financial reporting requirements.

Some PRIs suggested that having improved financial management capacity helped them to engage with stakeholders more effectively, have better relationships with, and be seen as more credible by, other funders besides DFAT and more able to demonstrate impact.

Finally, PRIs which had not already developed business units to generate additional income, did so. These mainly provided training (of researchers, policy analysts, professors, the public on various issues including how to undertake digital research), but also book publishing, a co-working space and the production of audio-visual products. However, some PRIs said that revenue from additional income generating activity was insignificant, partly due to COVID-19 and associated restrictions as well as inability to invest sufficient time and resources. In some cases, PRIs suggested that resourcing their business units detracted from their core research work.

Case study: exploring a new area of business

PRI 4 has a group of high-profile founders and a strong mandate of monitoring decentralisation implementation. The relevance of this mandate is reflected in a steady increase in revenue for research and project implementation, including from domestic sources. However, this PRI was among those that felt it necessary to develop alternative funding sources to help ensure future financial sustainability.

The PRI took advantage of the KSI's Investment Component to build a separate business entity that provides training on topics related to its specialist area of interest. The business was launched in 2021 and has held an inaugural training course targeting policy analysts, a new functional position in the government that PRI 4 has helped to promote, as well as university professors who teach public administration and public policy. This type of paid-for training is distinctive from the trainings PRI 4 held in the past, which were funded by donors. Although the training business is still in its early days, PRI 4 is optimistic that running training courses is a viable business option for the future.

10. Adapting to COVID-19

COVID-19 and associated restrictions affected PRIs in several ways.

Some PRIs said some of their funders (including government) re-allocated their funding away from research towards COVID-19 relief efforts. For some PRIs, this pitched them into competition with more rivals for fewer funds and leaving some PRIs with less funding. This flight amongst funders away from research was reflected in one PRI saying that the pandemic had left them with a declining number of funders. In the case of KSI, PRI funding was reduced slightly with savings made from moving research activities from in person to online which PRIs were able to repurpose.

Some PRIs said they had to delay research given travel restrictions and limited capacity to conduct research online (with for instance hard-to-reach participants with weak internet access). In one case a PRI said they avoided delaying research by delegating the task of undertaking research to community-level researchers.

In contrast to those who experienced a reduction in funding, a small number of PRIs realised opportunities to make COVID-19 and their impacts the focus of their research and secure funding to do so. With regards to KSI funds, some PRIs were able to secure permission on a timely basis to reallocate resources to fund COVID -related research. However, in one case, a PRI said KSI's response to their proposal to repurpose funds for Covid-19 related research took considerable time, resulting in them working with another funder.

Most PRIs were faced with the challenge of conducting both their research and engagement entirely online (or telephonically). Many embraced this, especially those that were familiar with digital technologies. One PRI said they were asked to undertake large phone surveys by a number of agencies (including the World Bank and Bappenas) whilst another realised a business opportunity to offer training to other academics and researchers on how best to undertake online research, coining the term 'netnography', a play on the term ethnography.

Initiating contact with people through purely online means was challenging. However, many PRIs found that they had better and more access to stakeholders including policymakers with whom they had existing relationships, through the use of platforms such as WhatsApp and Zoom. This was particularly true for PRIs located outside Jakarta in places like Yogyakarta and Bogor. For instance, PRIs transitioned to delivering their dissemination events through webinars which they found were well attended.

However, many also found over time stakeholders were less likely to respond to invitations to engage and when they did, were often distracted particularly during longer conversations/meetings. This was often described as 'zoom fatigue'. One PRI described the difficulties of building trust and rapport with research participants online especially when sensitive issues were concerned. Some PRIs said after some attempts

to undertake their work online given difficulties, they abandoned their efforts, resuming in-person research visits as soon as they were allowed. Most PRIs suggested that online engagement could complement but not replace in-person engagement.

Legislative and policy processes in some cases (such as the deliberation of the election law) were put on hold, which somewhat limited some PRIs' opportunities to engage with and influence policy. At the same time, several policy processes were being enacted without adequate stakeholder participation which inspired one PRI to engage with the media about this and advocate for more public participation in the passing of key laws and strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic.

From an organisational perspective, all PRI staff were forced to work remotely. A lot of staff were able to adapt, whilst some were not. This has resulted in difficulties in maintaining a sense of community amongst staff and broader networks. With restrictions having eased, some PRIs have embraced hybrid forms of work, giving staff more flexibility especially in the context of long commute times in Jakarta.

11. Key mediating factors

In this section we discuss key factors which helped or hindered the development of PRI's capacity in KSI's four areas of interest. These are organized into 1) contextual factors and 2) actor specific factors.

Context

More than half the PRIs suggested that since Joko Widodo came to power in 2014, the government had been more open to inputs from civil society including research inputs. For instance one PRI suggested agencies, such as the Police and Ministry of Religious Affairs which had previously been seen as insular were now open to external inputs. Another PRI suggested the government had an increased appetite for regulatory reform. However, one PRI suggested that the 'honeymoon' may well be nearing an end.

In some cases, this openness manifested itself in increased demand for expertise and advice from PRIs. For instance, government's increasing focus on evidence-based policymaking both at national and local level has seen increasing demand within government for operationalising legislation and regulation and for the training of policy analysts. However, other key power holders such as the private sector and the media were less vocal in their demands for expertise and advice from PRIs and other civil society actors.

The continued growth of online and social media, through platforms such as YouTube, Twitter, WhatsApp, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and others provided myriad avenues and channels for PRIs and their supporters to reach various stakeholders, including policymakers, civil society organisations as well as members of the public.

Despite openness and demand for research inputs, about half the PRIs said they were in no position to control how and the extent to which their inputs were considered, used and/or applied. Some PRIs said uptake was dependent on the psychology and incentives of particular office holders, on whether findings were politically acceptable and the perceptions and relationships policymakers had of and with PRIs. PRI attempts to influence change were hampered when particular office-holders were replaced and institutions were dissolved or merged with others.

Demand and openness to research inputs could also vary by issue area. For instance, PRIs suggested that government agencies and other stakeholders were more open to inputs in relation to agrarian issues, gender and women's issues, especially leadership in public life and radicalisation and terrorism. However, an issue such as HIV&AIDS was subject to stigma which shaped one's capacity to influence policy discourse and secure funding, whilst an issue such as religion, democracy and peace building tended not to be on funder's 'radar'.

Several PRIs highlighted the challenges of tracing whether one's policy research had influenced change. This was due to the often complex nature and opacity of policy processes. Even if recommendations were taken up in regulatory documents, policymakers were reluctant to give credit to PRIs, saying (legitimately) that they were the ones to make decisions not PRIs (unless PRIs were invited to draft regulations).

Finally, a small number of PRIs suggested that the economic context had influenced their commitment to improve the financial sustainability of their organisation. Specifically the continued growth of the

economy and the consolidation of Indonesia's middle-income status was continuing to change the donor landscape and pushing PRIs to seek funding from new sources.

Actors

A large number of PRIs suggested that changes that emerged happened due to the commitment, desire, actions and relationships of specific people in the organisation. For instance, some PRIs praised the efforts of staff, especially researchers, sometimes newly recruited with help from KSI's funds. Other key 'champions' included founders, directors and senior researchers, who were receptive to KSI inputs, responsible for taking key decisions, allocating resources accordingly, overseeing progress and were able to make use of relations with key stakeholders in positions of power. In one case, a PRI credited younger researchers and interns for urging research products to be packaged in shorter formats. In another, members of the Board were praised for improving research and knowledge management, whilst in a final example, one PRI praised a network of volunteers who helped to draft research proposals.

Despite increased profile and recognition of PRIs being a key outcome of KSI's phase 2, a large number of PRIs suggested that it was also a pre-condition for the changes they experienced (especially in engaging with and influencing government). For instance, some PRIs were known for being a credible source of information in their issue area, for their critical but constructive engagement, for their long history in working on a particular issue, for their independence, for their clear vision and values in relation to an issue, for having appropriate structures to deal with an issue and for being geographically close to government offices (putting those who were not at a disadvantage). PRIs also benefited from having large enough physical premises to facilitate meetings and seminars with policymakers and other stakeholders, which could provide a more neutral venue especially when there were significant differences between stakeholders.

The propensity for PRIs to make progress in KSI's areas of interest appears to be dependent on the identity of the PRIs at the time of engagement with KSI and their openness towards adjusting their approach. For some PRIs, KSI funding came at a time of transition, or during the early stages of establishing the organisation, which made them more open to adopting the approach promoted by KSI. Other organisations which were more well-established or which implemented specific ways of working prior to KSI were less willing to fully adopt KSI's approach.

A small number of PRIs suggested that the organisation-wide changes experienced by PRIs and documented earlier were attributable to other funders in addition to KSI.

University-based PRIs suggested that their parent institutions could be both a help and a hinderance in their growth and development. Some suggested that they benefited from reputations of their universities, that they provided a continuous pool of skilled researchers, provided physical space as well as a basic salary and helped to foster a sense of motivation to create and innovate. However, university systems and rules such as those which restrict the recruitment of non-teaching staff to undertake research could also hinder the growth of PRIs. Another university-based PRI suggested that there was little action they could take on issues around organisational and financial management as these functions fell under the authority of the university.

Finally, a small number of PRIs suggested they were more likely to promote policy change if they worked with others. One PRI said this was the case in the area of religious extremism and intolerance, where a

coalition of stakeholders from multiple spheres were more effective at being seen and heard. Another PRI suggested they successfully achieved policy change by working closely with their CSO networks and finding synergies between different projects.

12. Effectiveness of KSI's approach and inputs

In this section, we explore the effectiveness of KSI's approach in facilitating capacity development and the quality of its inputs or interventions.

Transitions

PRIs highlighted the transitions that KSI underwent throughout its lifespan and the impact this had on them. The most obvious change was the shift from core funding and an organisational focus in phase one to more restricted funding and a focus on specific targets in phase two. Overall, PRIs preferred the flexibility of phase one, whilst some felt that the more focussed approach of phase two had its benefits. One PRI, which had historically received significant amounts of flexible funding from DFAT and therefore felt the change more acutely described this as a 'culture shock' and said they subsequently made a small loss having had to return unspent funds to KSI. PRIs suggested that KSI staff lurched from one extreme to another in their engagement with PRIs. One PRI said there were many time-consuming meetings at the start, followed by a period of rarely held meetings to finally establishing working groups with PRIs that focused on similar issues.

PRIs welcomed the shift from a top-down approach where PRIs did not feel heard to a more participatory approach where they saw themselves as partners. We discuss these issues in more detail below. These shifts coincided with a change in staff between phases. Whilst these shifts were happening, PRIs suggested that communication from KSI was poor leaving them uncertain about, for instance, the rationale behind the changes (in funding and approach), what they were expected to do and what the implications might be for their respective organisations. Moreover, turnover amongst KSI staff after phase one led to a loss of organisational memory, with PRIs having to explain repeatedly to new staff what had happened during phase one.

Regarding the transitioning out from KSI, the capacity of PRIs to sustain the changes they have achieved in each of the four areas of interest will be dependent on funders willingness to fund processes to ensure research quality and policy engagement and influence, but also PRI's capacity to negotiate with their funders for these activities. It is unclear whether this has been a focus for KSI as it looks to exit from the programme.

Funding and approach

Some PRIs praised KSI for providing at least seven to eight years of continuous support, which was rare amongst research funders. Almost all PRIs found core funding administered during phase one, along with an organisational focus very helpful. This enabled PRIs to develop and/or strengthen their missions, plans, systems and processes (including research agendas and the development of standard operating procedures) as well as make investments in items such as infrastructure, facilities, salaries (especially of new staff), peer review, data storage, digitalization, website development, conference attendance and study tours amongst other things.

A few PRIs were critical of the more restricted funding that KSI provided during phase two, suggesting that they would have benefited from a continued focus on organisational capacity building in addition to research funding. Some PRIs did nevertheless acknowledge that funding during phase two provided them with flexibility in terms of research focus - enabling them to address existing topics in more depth, to expand into new areas, as well as cover the costs of stakeholder engagement, something which other funders rarely did. One PRI acknowledged that whilst KSI required seemingly elaborate plans, they did provide flexibility in implementation which was welcomed.

Moreover, interviews with PRIs suggested a circular or mutually reinforcing relationship between all four outcome areas during phase two: improvements in engagement and influence, network and profile, research quality and financial sustainability. For instance, one PRI said their solution to improving financial sustainability was to continue to produce high-quality research, which in turn improved their profile and networks, and promoted influence. Finally, being associated with KSI helped some PRIs to secure funding from other donors.

Relating to PRIs

Most PRIs appreciated the type of relationship that KSI had cultivated with them, especially during phase two. KSI staff were seen as an 'equal partner', a 'critical friend', understanding of PRI's organisational context, interested in their sustainability, not shying away from asking difficult questions, possessing a number of key qualities such as patience and being approachable and supportive and seen to be taking a facilitative, learning approach, coined by one PRI as "tut wuri handayani" (Javanese for giving encouragement from behind the scenes). PRIs welcomed KSI's positioning of them as experts and KSI staff as facilitators/coaches. However, this meant that KSI were not able to provide technical assistance in areas that PRIs may have lacked knowledge such as on how to improve research quality or improving the consideration of GEDSI throughout the research process.

One PRI suggested they were able to negotiate changes to themes and budget allocations. Another said KSI took them by the hand and helped them to think about what it would take to be more than a research firm. Several PRIs suggested KSI staff helped them to overcome obstacles such as stakeholders who were unwilling to engage and to subsequently expand their networks. And finally, one PRI said that planning processes were a "shared journey and an exciting exchange of ideas." However, such relationships were only possible through regular meetings - essential to develop trust – but which consumed considerable time and energy.

As discussed earlier, PRI's perception of their relationship with KSI during phase two departed from how this was perceived during phase one. KSI were seen as positioning themselves as teachers and PRIs as students, whilst the program was seen as rigid and inflexible. Nevertheless, some PRIs were also critical of KSI's approach during phase two, saying KSI often demanded a lot of information, but took their time in responding to PRI requests and was biased towards policy change that focused on central government regulation. However, another PRI suggested that KSI's actions were not always within their control.

Program logic

Almost all PRIs had something to say about what they tended to call the ‘program logic’, which they were asked to set out by KSI. Most PRIs said that they found developing and following this helpful. PRIs said it helped them to identify particular outcomes or targets and track back, thinking through which stakeholders they needed to engage with and influence, through stakeholder mapping exercises and what outputs they needed to produce. It helped to articulate a complex landscape in relatively simple terms and translate what might have been implicit (contained in a researcher’s head) into something more explicit through documentation which in turn promoted conversation amongst staff. Several PRIs said they would use this approach for other pieces of research they were being funded to undertake. Some PRIs also said that following such an approach helped to track policy influence as well as provided a reference for staff performance.

Some PRIs suggested that it wasn’t as difficult as it appeared at the start, whilst others said although it might have been a painful process to follow, it was well worth it. Yet others suggested that reaching consensus between KSI and the PRI on a program logic was too time consuming.

As discussed above, a few PRIs suggested that KSI’s interpretation of the program logic was too narrow. Although KSI’s formal definition of policy influence was wide in scope and incorporated a range of changes, in practice PRIs suggested that the focus was on “tangible” changes – perhaps linked to the requirement to provide proof of their influence/change which was easier when there was a specific document to refer to, which corresponded with wording in research, a presentation or policy brief. The focus was subsequently on tangible changes such as regulations and technical guidance issued by national level government officials within the executive which PRIs would deliver by building relationships with government officials, engaging them directly from the beginning of the research and at multiple points throughout the process and tailor the research to their needs and timelines.

However, this was at the expense of promoting less tangible but equally important changes amongst other stakeholder groups including the legislators, the judiciary, the public at levels of governance closer to communities, through a variety of other approaches to policy engagement. For instance one PRI emphasised engaging with community stakeholders through action research. Another PRI suggested that KSI’s emphasis encouraged PRIs to target more superficial changes that were achievable in the short term rather than more meaningful and longer-term changes, such as changes in practices or behaviours.

Training and capacity building

Two-thirds of the PRIs found joint training and capacity building in areas such as research communication (including using a range of formats and channels such as policy briefs, infographics, and video clips) to communicate key messages very helpful, especially for more junior researchers. However, a small number of PRIs suggested that training did not always meet the needs of individual PRIs.

Monitoring and reflecting on policy influence

About two-thirds of PRIs praised KSI for their approach to supporting them with monitoring their policy engagement work. Regular updates which PRIs were asked to produce, although cumbersome and seen as 'investigative', demonstrated KSI's commitment to them, encouraged PRIs to be more systematic in their monitoring processes and provided PRIs with information about the effectiveness of their engagement work. This in turn helped them to: reflect as an organisation about what was working and what was not, inform future policy engagement work and provide examples of impact that strengthened funding proposals.

Linking and brokering

About half the PRIs found KSI's linking and brokering work helpful. For instance, KSI established the Indonesian Development Forum (IDF) and convened learning events which provided opportunities for sharing, learning and networking with a range of stakeholders. KSI's working groups set up to facilitate progress in a number of issue areas including village development had a number of benefits. They:

- provided impetus for the production of new research,
- helped to facilitate dialogue and joint working amongst PRIs and between PRIs and other stakeholders including policymakers,
- provided PRIs with different perspectives and
- helped to improve/expand PRI's profile and networks, which in some cases led to new sources of funding.

Furthermore, PRIs welcomed KSI's efforts to broker relations between PRI staff and influential stakeholders within government as well as researchers abroad in Australia.

Community building amongst PRIs

KSI helped to facilitate some collective action among PRIs to influence issues in the broader research ecosystem such as research permits and ethics clearance. For instance, the 16 PRIs in the recent K2P conference developed a joint memo on research independence and collaboration targeted at BRIN (the newly formed National Research and Innovation Agency Badan or Riset dan Inovasi Nasional, BRIN) and Bappenas. Half the PRIs commented on these efforts but at a general level (not focussing on specific examples) as a means to build a community amongst the 16 PRIs.

Overall, PRIs were ambivalent about this. On one hand, two PRIs suggested that the differences amongst PRIs were too great for effective learning and joint work to take place. On the other hand, one PRI suggested interaction generated some competition which helped to drive up standards, whilst another said that other PRIs could provide knowledge and expertise that KSI might otherwise bring in through external consultants.

One PRI suggested the Aliansi Riset Kebijakan (ARK or the policy research alliance) helped to generate useful lessons, whilst another said while it was a good idea, it had not worked out well (but not saying

why). One PRI said there was an opportunity for PRIs to work together to support the government with national and international issues such as Indonesia's role in the G20. However, organising and hosting joint meetings was resource intensive and required some leadership, with no one PRI willing to provide leadership amongst their peers. Unfortunately given the congested nature of meetings with PRIs we were unable to pursue this area in more detail.

13. Facilitating PRI development beyond KSI

In this concluding section, we make some suggestions on what can be done to facilitate the continued development of PRIs in Indonesia. This draws on what participants from PRIs, KSI and DFAT shared with us during the data collection and sense making process as well as our own reflections. Suggestions are organised around 1) what PRIs can do for themselves and 2) what funders including DFAT can do.

What PRIs can do for themselves

We suggest PRIs can:

- **Continue, and build on, the work initiated by KSI.** This includes:
 - developing the capacity of researchers and addressing GEDSI in research
 - developing communication strategies to improve policy advocacy efforts;
 - broadening the types of stakeholders involved in policy advocacy and developing multi-disciplinary coalitions to support the policymaking process.
 - collaborating with BRIN on the policy and regulatory side of how the government manages research
 - using the tools introduced by KSI to track the impact of policy research;
 - support government to pilot new policies, as well as monitoring and reviewing them (suggesting they move from being a think tank to being a ‘think and do’ tank)
- **Collaborate and support one another:** PRIs see a benefit of working together. They expressed a desire to maintain the working groups and alliances set up during KSI. The differences between PRIs allow members to learn, but also create competition and conflict, which PRIs might avoid by not engaging. Furthermore to move things forward, PRIs might need formal leadership. However, they are likely to avoid taking a formal leadership position to avoid the envy from their peers, whilst a leaderless group might result in larger PRIs taking an informal leadership position, which might create resentment. These issues will need to be explored and addressed in order to move forward.

What funders including DFAT can do

We suggest funders:

- **Acknowledge the complexity and nuance of change and change processes:** if funders do support PRIs in some way, they will naturally be interested in what sort of changes they are able to achieve. Given the complex non-linear and multi-factoral nature of policy and policy processes, we suggest that funders hold PRIs to account for the quality of the efforts they make to influence policy and not policy change itself. However, if funders do hold PRIs to account for changes in policy, we suggest that they manage their expectations in relation to policy processes and the likely pace of change. This includes understanding the realities of how long policy advocacy takes, as well as a desire on the part of PRIs to include a broader range of stakeholders, including the local community and the general public.

- **Fund third parties (such as well-connected consultants)** who can in turn play a ‘critical friend’ role in relation to PRIs and broker relationships between PRIs and other stakeholders. A critical friend can help PRIs to bring about change through an action learning approach whereby change comes about through regular reflection on their actions. On brokering relations, relevant stakeholders might include government actors such as BRIN as well as foreign research organisations and universities, which are interested in collaborating on topics that are of mutual relevance. On the latter, PRIs suggest that such partnerships can help improve their quality of research and enable Indonesian researchers to publish in internationally renowned academic journals. However, care will have to be taken to ensure that Indonesian counterparts in trans-national collaborations (especially those featuring organisations in white majority countries) do not become contractors but are treated as fully equal.
- **Manage transitions.** If funders do establish PRI capacity development programmes, they usually comprise key moments: beginnings, endings and shifts from one phase to another, when intended outcomes, approaches and instruments might change and staff might come and go. These mark the ‘life’ of a programme but can create both excitement and anxiety for all those involved. Shifts in the focus of a programme can also create ‘winners’ and ‘losers’, reshape relationships and working practices and/or affect some organisations more than others. The end of a programme in particular can often have significant material and emotional impact on staff. We suggest that these moments are carefully managed, with staff from the founder and managing contractor taking time to effectively plan, communicate and engage with all concerned on a timely basis and help them consider what they might lose as well as gain (or have lost and gained).

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