

DFAT's Policy Influence

A Realist Synthesis of 2017 Program Evaluations

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Policy Influence

Development happens through the policies and institutions of partner countries

Ways to influence policy

- *knowledge brokering*
- *alliances or coalitions*
- *community organising*

Ownership

1. The most successful policy influence came from policy problems that were locally identified and owned

Working politically

2. Understanding of the current political and institutional context and program flexibility are success factors

Fit for purpose

3. Policy influence needs to have something to offer that is relevant, appropriate and affordable for the context

Deliberate strategy

4. Having a deliberate strategy for policy influence is more effective than serendipity or a so-called 'demonstration effect'

- policy dialogue;
- supporting policy implementation
- capacity development and technical assistance;

Relationships

5. Good relationships are critical in knowledge brokering

Realist Synthesis Method

1. Context – Mechanism – Outcome configurations
2. Interviews
3. Mid-range mechanisms
4. Systematic coding & sub-coding
5. Analysis

Strengths and weaknesses

Strengths	Weaknesses
Looks at why	Evaluations often do not explain why
Considers all evidence	Sample not representative
Provides something useful	Time consuming and Nvivo is unfriendly
Mid-Range Theories and Mechanisms	Implementation issues drown out context findings