Swiss Programme for Research on Global Issues for Development

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r4d SYNTHESIS NEWS #4

The synthesis news are an information service for the r4d network to stay updated about the activities and opportunities in the synthesis initiatives

We hope this copy of the synthesis news finds you well and healthy despite the extraordinary situation the global community is facing due to the corona pandemic.

A large number of r4d researchers from all around the world contributed so far to r4d synthesis processes and many more have participated in dialogue events, meetings, seminars and film screenings. Thank you for your interest and engagement, for sharing your ideas and insights, and for participating in dissemination activities. COVID 19 has slowed down the planned work in some cases but also initiated new ways of collaborating online. Enjoy reading the r4d Synthesis News #4.

R4D PROGRAMME SYNTHESIS

Digital storytellers, a tangible experience on contributions of r4d projects to SDGs

The first phase of the Digital Storytellers is coming to an end: 27 r4d projects participated in this synthesis initiative so far. Supported by the team from Paititi-Lab, researchers produced 43 video-clips in two formats, a short and agile format (1-2 minutes) and a more detailed format with interviews (3-4 minutes). These video-clips tell stories about how and where the respective projects are contributing to achieve multiple SDGs, thus giving voice not only to researchers, but also to farmers, community leaders, local authorities and many other partners and beneficiaries of the r4d programme. Dissemination activities are ongoing by the projects themselves, and through our knowledge platform https://www.k4d.ch/

and YouTube Channel. The collection of Digital Storytellers video-clips will be published until August 2020 in five batches. Please have a look and share the k4d posts as well as our twitter and facebook posts in your networks.

Understanding utilisation of research knowledge in development pathways as a proxy for impact

The core of this project is an in-depth survey conducted during the past months in which 95 responses from 43 r4d projects were collected. Most responses concern the global South: 39% Africa, 28% Asia and 12% Latin America. From this database it is now possible to analyse how research knowledge was generated, who is using this knowledge and for what. The synthesis team is currently running the analysis and tentative results were presented in the Webinar "How to integrate policy with research? Lessons learnt from various r4d synthesis mandates" of the Public Health synthesis project "Evidence to Policy".

Capitalisation on dealing with complex global issues of development

Promising developments shape the current stage of the CapEx, the synthesis project looking at how r4d projects deal with complexity in multiple dimensions:
The CapEx team is complete now with two experienced documentarists from SKAT Foundation, Sandra Fürst and Meleesa Naughton.
Five r4d projects (FATE, FoodSAF, Woody Weeds, HIA4SD, One Health Guatemala) will participate as learning cases to provide a sharing opportunity for the r4d network. The first step of the capitalisation, i.e. reflexion, will take place through a series of meetings tailored according to the circumstances of each learning case.

Brilliant failures in research partnerships

This synthesis initiative aims at filtering out difficult moments – technical, personal, emotional – that individuals or research groups experienced during their research partnerships. What do we experience as a failure in research partnerships? Are we aware and sensitive towards failures and do we embrace or ignore failures? Why do failures happen? How do we move on and what is necessary to build up even stronger partnerships out of initial failures? Using an innovative interview approach, the team extracts common experiences, mindsets towards failures, the strength of embracing failures, lessons, and promising strategies that will support creating and maintaining research partnerships in future. A first round of interviews took place in Switzerland during the beginning of 2020.

R4D SOCIAL CONFLICTS SYNTHESIS

The 68-minute research documentary "Inequality and Conflict – Beyond us and them" emerged from the Social Conflicts synthesis process. After the premieres in Geneva and Guatemala City in November 2019, the documentary was screened in various places. Highlights were the reactions in Guatemala and Burkina Faso. The feedbacks from these audiences pushed us forward to consequently subtitling the documentary in four languages and to explore options for dubbing the film into additional local languages. These latest steps are being taken for a wide dissemination of the research documentary and the research results. Working on the film did not only allow for intense exchange between the three r4d projects and their different perspectives. The research documentary "Inequality and Conflict – Beyond us and them" proofs to be a medium that enables dialogue and exchange beyond academia about conflicts and peace-building, particularly along the thematic lines of inequality, gender relations and dealing with painful pasts and presents.

The **online release of the research documentary "Inequality and Conflict – Beyond us and them"** is planned for early June 2020 on the r4d programme YouTube Channel.

Due to the corona pandemic the closing event of the Social Conflict module had to be cancelled. We are preparing other opportunities for exchange and debate about the messages emerging from the r4d Social Conflicts projects and synthesis activities.

R4D EMPLOYMENT SYNTHESIS

During a workshop on 13 March 2020 participants from seven r4d projects identified a number of topics for potential synthesis initiatives.

- Different perspectives on the labour market in development countries - asking the right questions
- Impact of trade on labour market outcomes in Ghana: a macro-and micro synthesis
- Visualisation of women along the value chain in coffee and garment sector in Laos
- Impact of illicit financial flows on livelihood outcomes
- Decent transformation from education to work
- PhD Synthesis Network

Researchers as well as Review Panel members are invited to submit concept notes for synthesis projects on these topics or any other cross-cutting topic until 1 July 2020. The funding decision will be made in August 2020.

R4D ECOSYSTEMS SYNTHESIS

r4d Achieving SDG15: Co-benefits and trade-offs with other SDGs
The team uses qualitative comparative analysis to examine whether synergies and trade-offs of SDG 15 with other SDGs appear in distinct combinations and patterns, and to assess whether these combinations or patterns are linked to context-specific variables. Fourteen workshops were held in multiple sites including Nairobi, Arusha, Addis Ababa, Rangoon, Vientiane, Antananarivo, Hue City, Bogor, Yaoundé and a virtual meeting in Colombia. The insights of these workshops are now under analysis.

Successful utilisation of research knowledge in the r4d Ecosystems module
A set of thirty survey responses from academic and non-academic actors provides an overview of how research knowledge from six r4d projects dealing with ecosystems is utilised at multiple geographic scales and in different areas (e.g. field application, policy-making). Preliminary analysis of the survey show e.g. the importance of identifying champions among stakeholders in an early stage of a project. and the benefits and challenges of interdisciplinary project teams representing social and natural sciences.

Dealing with complexity: Burden or opportunity for research on ecosystems?
What is necessary for dealing with thematic, geographic or disciplinary complexity in ecosystems management? As a first step towards answering this question, the team has analysed r4d projects' understanding of complexity, its manifestations and its management as documented in over hundred references including scientific publications, reports, blogs, websites or white papers.

R4D FOOD SECURITY SYNTHESIS

The three Food Security synthesis project are all progessing well.

Highlights can already be reported from the Food Systems Caravan, which successfully toured through West Africa from 23 September to 6 November. It reported throughout the road show from the seminars, conferences, field visits and high school open classes on Food Systems Caravan Facebook page and on the Food Systems Caravan website. Along its journey the Food Systems Caravan team organised 31 events, bringing together 2162 participants from the private sector, young generations, public administration and the academic community. The team also launched a Student Project Competition – "Students as change makers" in which 13 projects were submitted. Four innovative ideas were selected for awards. Congratulations to the student teams from Benin and Ghana!

Many actors were interviewed, sceneries filmed and sound collected throughout. Sara Baga, the graphic designer and filmmaker, is now producing a documentary as well as short videos emerging from the Food Systems Caravan. The online r4d Lunch #Agroecologyworks!, jointly organised together with Biovision on 22 and 23 April 2020, brought together more than 60 participants who benefited from first glimpses into selected film sequences and provided valuable comments and feedback. More opportunities for exchange will be coming up – stay tuned!

R4D PUBLIC HEALTH SYNTHESIS

Two synthesis initiatives revolving around public health issues are ongoing.

Evidence to Policy as emerging from r4d public health
A series of webinars with inputs from r4d projects are beimg conducted on topics relevant for public health policy makers.
Webinars that took already place:
- What to do with sex and gender in health research?
- Lessons learnt from Community-based HIV Testing & Same-day ART Initiatiion in Lesotho
- Power, participation and co-production in North-South partnerships
- How to integrate policy with research? Lessons learnt from various r4d synthesis mandates

Upcoming webinars:
- How to leave no one behind in the strive towards UHC? Lessons learnt from national health insurance schemes in Ghana
- Digital transformation in health? Lessons learnt from various r4d projects

The recorded webinars will be made available on the r4d youtube channel.

Making a difference in one place
Synthesised key policy and health systems-related findings of r4d projects have been indentified to be shared with stakeholders in one country - Malawi - to develop and disseminate specific and actionable policy and health systems recommendations. Based on the experiences in Malawi, a partnership for effective r4d research-to-policy translation in sub-Saharan African countries will be developed.

TIMELINE SYNTHESES ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

01 July 2020	Deadline for submission of concept notes for Emplyoment synthesis projects
16-18 Nov 2020	Geneva Health Forum with inputs from r4d network

Please check out our r4d Events page for updated information on meetings and events.

CONTACTS SYNTHESIS COORDINATORS AND LEADS

If you have questions or want more information, please contact the respective synthesis coordinator or projects leaders.

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Digital Storytellers
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Brilliant failures of research partnerships
Dr. Pia Hollenbach, University of Lausanne

Understanding utilisation of research knowledge
Dr. Johanna Jacobi and Dr. Aymara Llanque, University of Bern

Experience capitalisation on complex global issues
Dr. Manuel Flury, formerly SDC

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r4d Ecosystems synthesis coordination
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Achieving SDG15: Co-benefits and trade-offs with other SDGs
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Successful utilisation of research knowledge in the r4d Ecosystems module
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Dealing with complexity: Burden or opportunity for research on ecosystems?
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Food Systems Caravan
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Engendering equity in food security research
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Food and nutrition security in West Africa
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Evidence to Policy as emerging from r4d public health
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Making a difference in place
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Digital Storyteller workstation: Opening article "Scientists as storytellers" to announce the first publications of video-clips on www.k4d.ch.