Science diplomacy, science advice and research for development
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Workshop on science advice to governments
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Outline

1. Context for science diplomacy: North, South and “research for development
2. The importance scientific capacity-building
3. Tackling shared development challenges
4. Innovating in how we collaborate
Thinking about science diplomacy: current context

- Science diplomacy is not new, but it is in the scholarly literature!
- The same could be said for science advice
- It still reflects a global North-South imbalance
From Cold War to SDGs

• Reducing tensions through collaborative science
• Special importance for countries like Canada → contributes to strategic positioning
• Special importance for organizations like ICSU
• Special importance for disciplines like oceanography, climate science, infectious disease, ...
• The SDGs as a catalyst?
Science diplomacy context

- It means different things to different people.

- Links to: high-quality science, national / international organizations, and science advice.

- **So what can it mean for Africa?**
  - Access to research and resources?
  - Increased international geopolitical role?
  - Improved bilateral/multilateral relationships?

Source: wordclouds.com, from analysis of 2 NAS and Royal Society publications
Canada’s IDRC: Investing in solutions

Canada’s International Development Research Centre (IDRC) invests in knowledge, innovation, and solutions to improve the lives of people in the developing world.
IDRC program Focus

Agriculture and Environment
• Agriculture and food security
• Climate change
• Food, environment, and health

Inclusive Economies
• Employment and growth
• Governance and justice
• Maternal and child health
• Think Tank Initiative

Technology and Innovation
- Foundations for innovation
- Networked economies
  - Individual capacity
  - Organizational capacity
  - Cutting-edge, collaborative research
Building science capacity (1)

• Individuals who can become leaders in academia and beyond

• Towards a more inclusive science: women and marginalized groups

• Focusing on early-career

• Communication skills

• Opportunities to engage with policymakers (e.g., COP meetings)
Building science capacity (2)

• Strengthening organizations for advancing science in-country and beyond

• Supporting international research consortia that operate at the science-policy interface

• Increasing demand for science and science advice (e.g., Think Tank Initiative and INGSA)
Tackling shared challenges

• Nationally-driven, but globally relevant

• Identifying research gaps in public and private funding

• Prioritizing issues such as inequality, violence against women, climate change resilience

• Scaling-up, scaling-out when it makes sense

Photos: IDRC.
New forms of collaboration

• Moving away from “knowledge transfer” partnerships

• Working with non-traditional partners in the public, private and non-governmental sectors

• Using infrastructure to strengthen relationships

• Being reactive and mobilizing the right partners quickly

• Global networks: Global Research Council, IAP, ICSU, etc.
Putting the pieces together

- Setting national/regional research agendas
- Harnessing the SDGs to facilitate connections
- Science advice more than ever
- Innovative collaborations and open science
- Linking science academies, granting councils, research networks, etc.