

## Terms of Reference for Researcher and Research Assistant

### Realistic Evaluation of the Public Revenue and Expenditure Analysis (PERA)

#### I. Introduction

The Australia Indonesia Partnership for Decentralization (AIPD), funded by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) has the general objective of strengthening the system of regional autonomy implemented in Indonesia in 2001. It targets improvements in the delivery of services in the health, education and infrastructure sectors as key to improving growth and welfare. AIPD contributes to the achievement of this goal through improving public finance management by strengthening both supply (executives) and demand (legislatives) sides. The program is operating in twenty selected districts in five provinces of Indonesia. The program is also providing assistance to these five provincial level governments.

Among the activities supported by AIPD is the Public Expenditure and Revenue Analysis (PERA)<sup>1</sup> to help improve local government planning and budgeting for service delivery in these sectors, shifting them from a strategy of administrative compliance towards one that is evidence- and needs-based. The two main obstacles are believed to be the lack of practical analytic capacity at the regional level, and the absence of accurate and reliable data on real conditions in the regions. In response, the objectives of the Public Expenditure and Revenue Analysis (PERA) are to:

- a. Develop the experience and habit of evidence-based policy making in the regions
- b. Build the capacity of local academia to collaborate with regional governments
- c. Improve the knowledge of local legislators and CSOs on local finance and public services in their regions.

The design of the PERA is based on the growing body of experience over the past five years with the World Bank's Public Expenditure Analysis and Capacity Enhancement (PEACH) program, including studies executed at the provincial level in three of AIPD's five provinces. Based on this experience, AIPD is expanding the program concept to focus at the district level in order to better leverage the bulk of decentralized resources – regional autonomy provides districts the authority and the budget to implement programs, while the province's main role is to coordinate across districts.

To date, no systematic or programmatic analysis has been undertaken to examine the impact or long term effectiveness of PEACH activities. This provides AIPD an opportunity to make a significant contribution to the understanding of how these types of programs work – or don't work. PERA Evaluation Design has been finalized. This Terms of Reference is intended to provide main reference for selecting the 2<sup>nd</sup> evaluators/researchers for the evaluation team.

#### II. PERA Realist Evaluation – A summary<sup>2</sup>

The realist evaluation aims to evaluate the policy influence of PERA. Specifically, the evaluation aims to understand why policy-makers choose to make use of PERA reports, what outcomes it is likely to achieve, and under what contexts PERA research is likely to be used. The objectives of PERA Evaluation is therefore:

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<sup>1</sup> See AusAID, "Generic Terms of Reference: Public Expenditure and Revenue Analysis", 2011 for more detail on the PERA design.

<sup>2</sup> Summarized from PERA Realist Evaluation Design – version Nov 2013

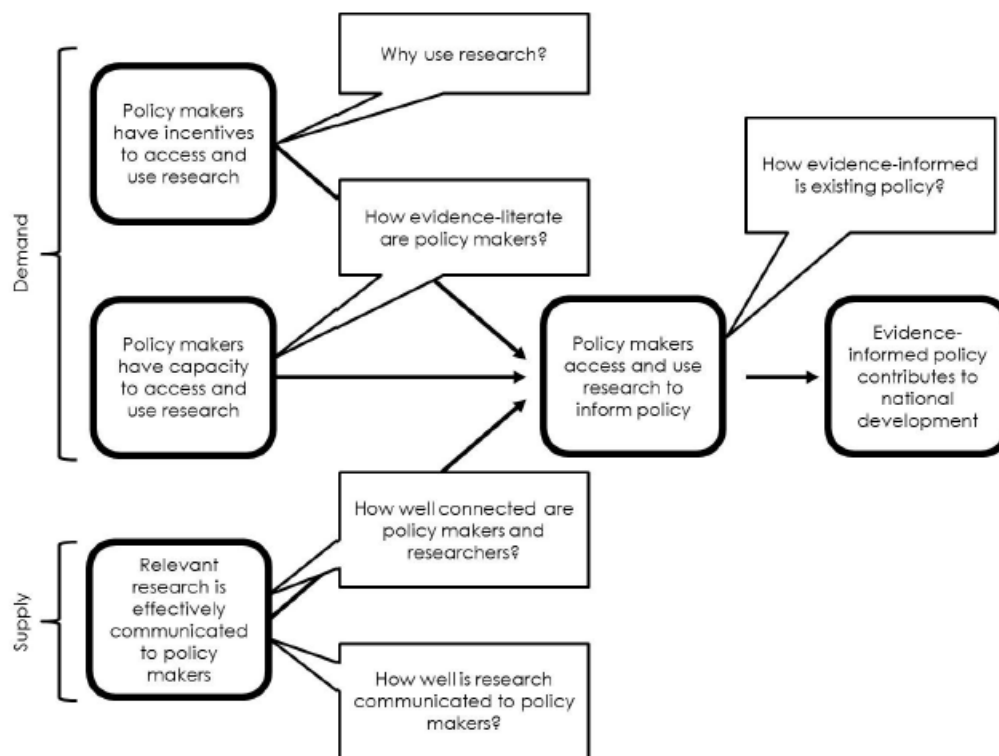
- Provide regular feedback to AIPD program on how it can better influence the policies of local governments and promote evidence-based policy-making.
- Advance the theory on realist evaluation and how it applies in a local government context.
- To advance the understanding of evidence-based policy-making, particularly in the context of local governments in Indonesia.

Through analysing policy influence of PERA, this evaluation aims to assess to what extent evidence-policy making takes place in sub-national governments in Indonesia.

For Evidence Based Policy Making to take place, the following three conditions need to be fulfilled:

- Sufficient supply of relevant research that is communicated effectively;
- Policy makers have the capacity to access and use research; and
- Policy makers are motivated or have sufficient incentives to access and use research.

**Diagram 2: Evidence-Based Policy Making**



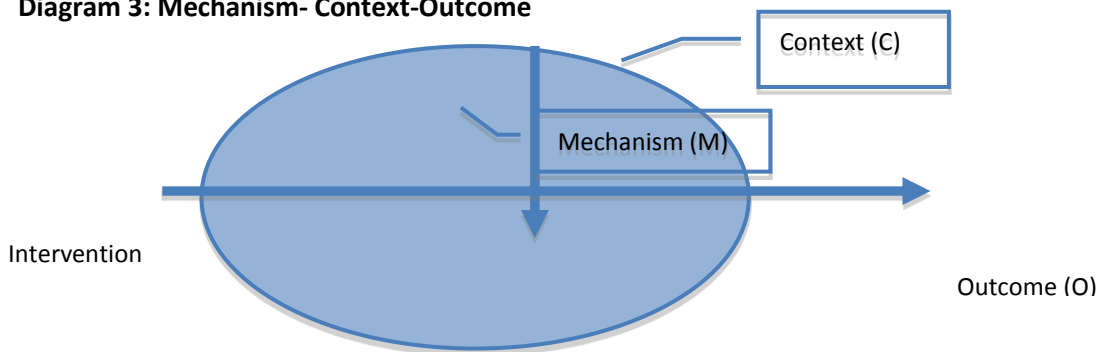
The scope of this evaluation, however, will be focused on why policy-makers use research. That is, what motivations and incentives government officials have for using PERA reports when formulating planning and budgeting policy. In order to focus on motivations and incentives, the following assumptions must hold:

- Policy-makers have sufficient capacity to understand and use PERA.
- The research is relevant and effectively communicated to policy makers.

This evaluation will use the “realist evaluation” approach, as set out by Ray Pawson and Nick Riley in their 1998 book *Realistic Evaluation*.<sup>3</sup> Realist evaluation is a species of theory driven evaluation that believe that programs are theories incarnate. Theory-driven evaluation is based on the principle that programs are comprised of assumptions about how change in the reasoning of participants is brought about by the provision of program resources and activities.<sup>4</sup> The main feature of realist evaluation is the approach to understanding and explaining how programs work. Understanding how programs work is through searching for underlying mechanisms that in particular contexts generate outcomes.

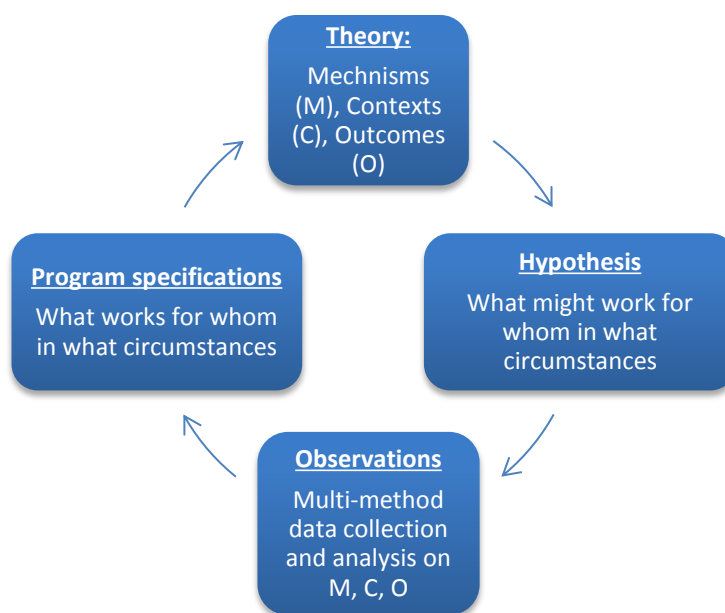
The mechanism-context-outcome components of realist causal explanation are represented with the ‘football’ diagram below.

**Diagram 3: Mechanism- Context-Outcome**



Context refers to salient conditions that are likely to enable or constrain the activation of program mechanisms. Outcomes are generated by activation of mechanisms. A feature of realist evaluation is the principle of “open systems” principles, which is a recognition that programs are implemented in a changing and permeable social work, and that program effectiveness may thus be subverted or enhanced through the unanticipated intrusion of new contexts and new causal powers. Thus as theories about context, mechanism, and outcomes evolve because of the changes in the social world, these theories are systematically retested and refined allowing evaluations to cumulate and build.

**Diagram 4: The realist evaluation cycle**



<sup>3</sup> Pawson, Ray and Nick Tilley, 1997, *Realist Evaluation* (2011 edition), London.

<sup>4</sup> Astbury, Brad, 2013, ‘Some reflections on Pawson's Science of Evaluation: A Realist Manifesto’, *Evaluation*, 19, 383.

The Evaluation will be conducted for the period of February 2014 – April 2015, as detailed in the following phases:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>
February 2014	Workshop to finalise survey instruments
February - March 2014	<b>Phase one data collection:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- FGD with AIPD staff</li> <li>- FGD with researchers</li> <li>- Interview with UNHAS quality assurance team</li> <li>- Interview with PMC members in 6 districts (approx 10 members per PMC)</li> </ul>
March/April 2014	<b>Analyse interviews, desk review of relevant documents and write report for phase one:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Phase one evaluation aims to guide the design and implementation of 2014 AIPD activities in order to influence the 2014 planning and budgeting process</li> </ul>
April/May 2014	<b>Phase two (2014) data collection:</b> observe planning discussions in 5-6 districts.
May/June 2014	Analyse data and write <b>interim phase two (2014) evaluation report</b>
June 2014	Workshop to present findings and reassess evaluation design and survey instruments
October/November 2014	<b>Phase two (2014) data collection:</b> observe planning discussions in 5-6 districts.
November/December 2014	Analyse data and write <b>2014 phase two evaluation report</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Phase two (2014) evaluation aims to guide the design and impl of 2015 AIPD activities.</li> </ul>
December 2014	Workshop to present findings and reassess evaluation design and survey instruments
Feb – March 2015	<b>Phase two (2014) data collection:</b> observe planning discussions in 5-6 districts.
April 2015	Analyse data and write <b>final evaluation report</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The final evaluation aims to guide the design and implementation of either a continuation of AIPD or recommendations for future projects that promotes research and evidence-based policy-making.</li> </ul>

For this evaluation, AIPD will need to hire an additional two people to join the evaluation team, namely a researcher and a research assistant.

Position	Role	ARF Level	Number of Days (indicative)
Team Leader (already contracted)	Lead overall design and implementation of evaluation, ensure data collection consistent, primary writer	Dis Group C Job Level 4	126
Researcher	Conduct interviews, analyse data, write report	Dis Group B Job Level 3	116
Research assistant	Manage the interview transcripts, gather documents, join in the field work and support analysis.	Dis Group B Job Level 1	120

#### Outputs:

Researcher	Field Data Collection Reports Evaluation Reports (jointly produced with Team Leader)
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#### Qualifications & Competence of Researcher

Responsibilities: The researcher has primary responsibility for conducting the field research and support the team leader to analyse the data and write the report. The researcher shall possess the following qualities:

- Post-Graduate degree in Social, Political Sciences or Public policy, PhD is preferred.
- Extensive research experience (10 or more years), particularly in conducting field research in Indonesia. This is shown by his/her publications (books/journals).
- Experience with conducting qualitative studies and using a variety of research instruments.
- Experience in engaging with a variety of stakeholders including government, donors and
- Fluent in Bahasa Indonesia and English.