The Context, Evidence & Links Framework

Simple Questions:

- **The external environment**: Who are the key actors? What is their agenda? How do they influence the political context?
- The political context: Is there political interest in change? Is there room for manoeuvre? How do they perceive the problem?
- **The evidence:** Is it there? Is it relevant? Is it practically useful? Are the concepts familiar or new? Does it need re-packaging?
- Links: Who are the key individuals? Are there existing networks to use? How best to transfer the information? The media? Campaigns?



Detailed Questions:

External Environment

- 1. Who are main international actors in the policy process?
- 2. What influence do they have? Who influences them?
- 3. What are their aid priorities and policy agendas?
- 4. What are their research priorities and mechanisms?
- 5. How do social structures and customs affect the policy process?
- 6. Are there any overarching economic, political or social processes and trends?
- 7. Are there exogenous shocks and trends that affect the policy process?

Links

- 1. Who are the key stakeholders?
- 2. Who are the experts?
- 3. What links and networks exist between them?
- 4. What roles do they play? Are they intermediaries between research and policy?
- 5. Whose evidence and research do they communicate?
- 6. Which individuals or institutions have a significant power to influence policy?
- Are these policy actors and networks legitimate? Do they have a constituency among the poor?

Context

- 1. Who are the key policy actors?
- 2. Is there a demand for research and new ideas among policymakers?
- 3. What are the sources of resistance to evidence based policymaking?
- 4. What is the policy environment: structures, processes, legal framework and opportunities for input into formal processes?
- 5. How do national and community-level political, social and economic structures and interests affect the room for manoeuvre of policymakers?
- 6. Who shapes the aims and outputs of policies?
- 7. How do assumptions and prevailing narratives influence policymaking; to what extent are decisions routine, incremental, fundamental or emergent, and who supports or resists change?

Evidence

- 1. What is the current theory or prevailing narratives?
- 2. Is there enough evidence (research based, experience and statistics)? How divergent is it
- 3. What type of evidence exists? What type convinces policymakers? How is evidence presented?
- 4. Is the evidence relevant? Is it accurate, material and applicable?
- 5. How was the information gathered and by whom?
- 6. Are the evidence and the source perceived as credible and trustworthy by policy actors?
- 7. Has any information or research been ignored and why?

