

The logo for the International Social Science Council (ISSC) features the letters 'I', 'S', 'S', and 'C' in a bold, black, sans-serif font. Each letter is contained within a vertical rectangular bar of a light purple color. The bars are arranged horizontally and are slightly offset from each other, creating a sense of depth and movement.

international social science council



# The International Social Science Council

11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the IRDR Science Committee Beijing, China, 6,  
10-11 June 2014

Vivi Stavrou  
Senior Executive Manager



## Historical evolution

- Begun as a council of high-level advisors to UNESCO in 1953
- Through next couple of decades largely a mechanism for UNESCO to support the international social science disciplinary associations
- With drying out of resources directed at social sciences, ISSC had to reinvent itself
- Enlarged membership, developing new activities (WSSForum, Report, Fellows, sponsor research prog and networks), and now a research funder (T2S)

# Activities



# World Social Science Fora

Research Programmes and Networks

World Social Science Reports

Strengthening the social sciences to help solve global problems

World Social Science Fellows

World Social Science Prizes

2009 Bergen, Norway:  
***One Planet – Worlds Apart***

2013 Montreal, Canada:  
***Transformations and the Digital Age***

2015 Durban, South Africa:  
***Transforming Global Relations for a Just World***

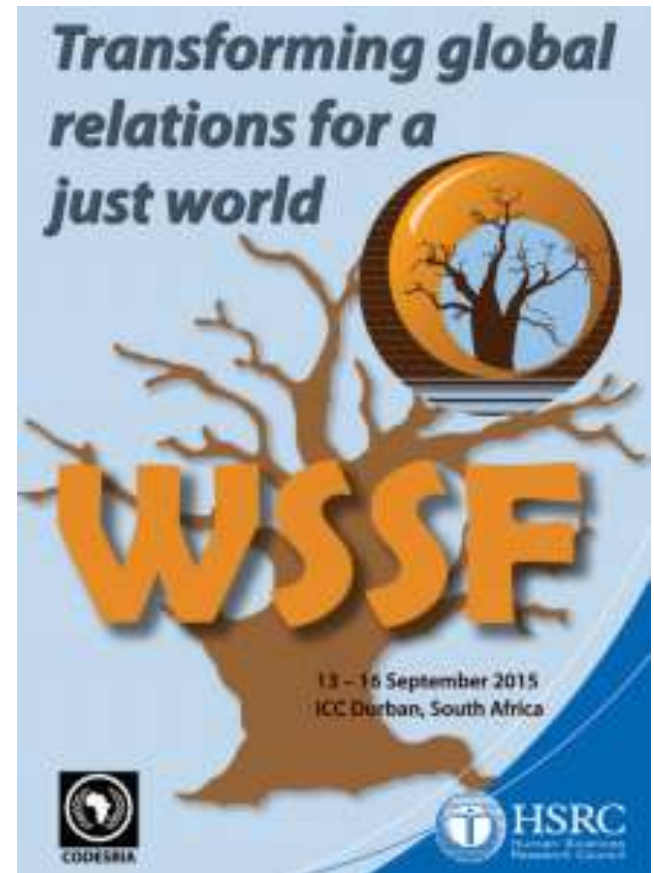
2017/18: ...

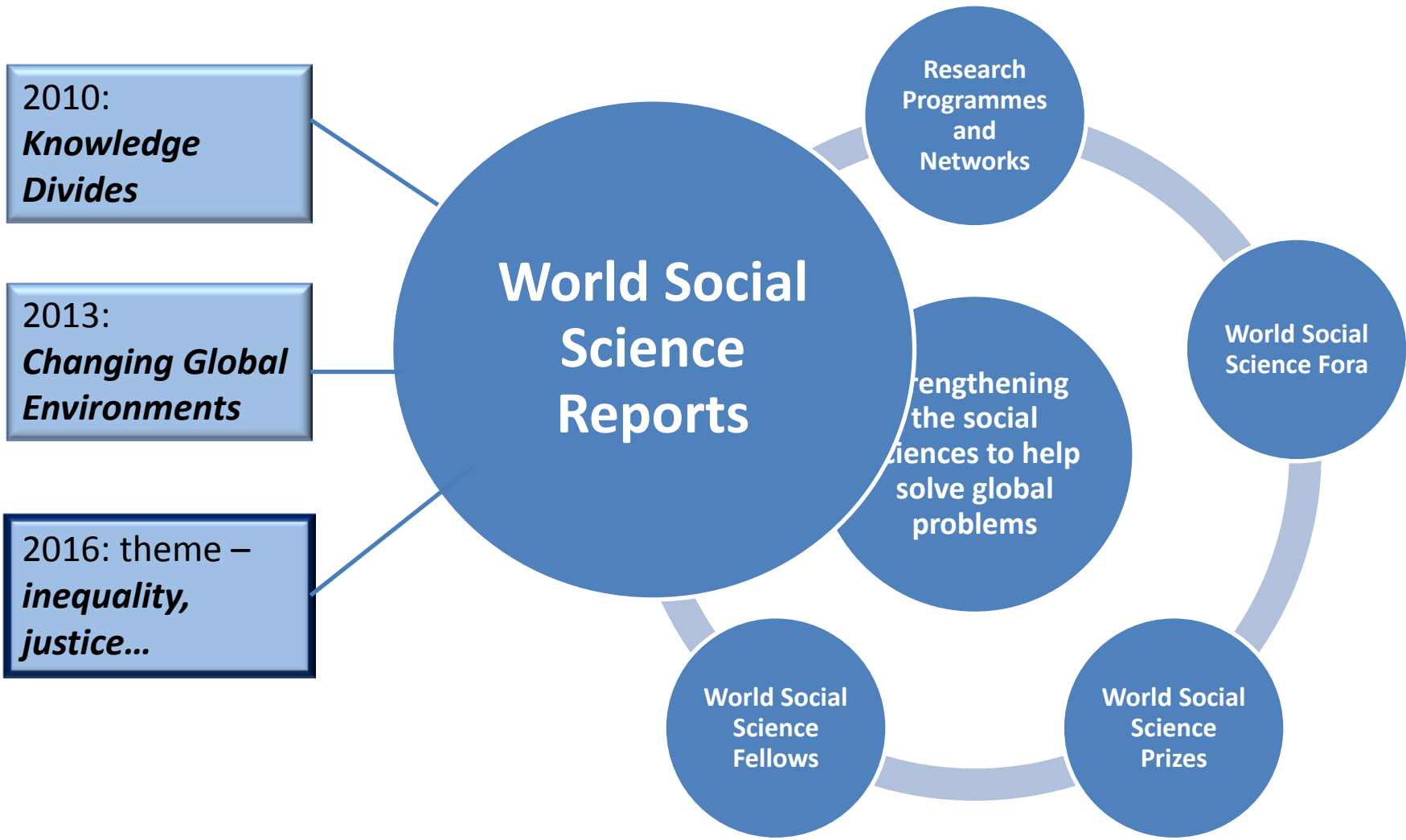


## ***Transforming Global Relations for a Just World***

The third in the ISSC's series of Fora, this event will take place in Durban, South Africa, 13-16 September 2015.

The 2015 Forum is hosted and organised by a consortium of African partners led by HSRC and CODESRIA.







UNESCO  
Publishing

ISSC  
International Social Science Council

OECD publishing

# World Social Science Report

2013

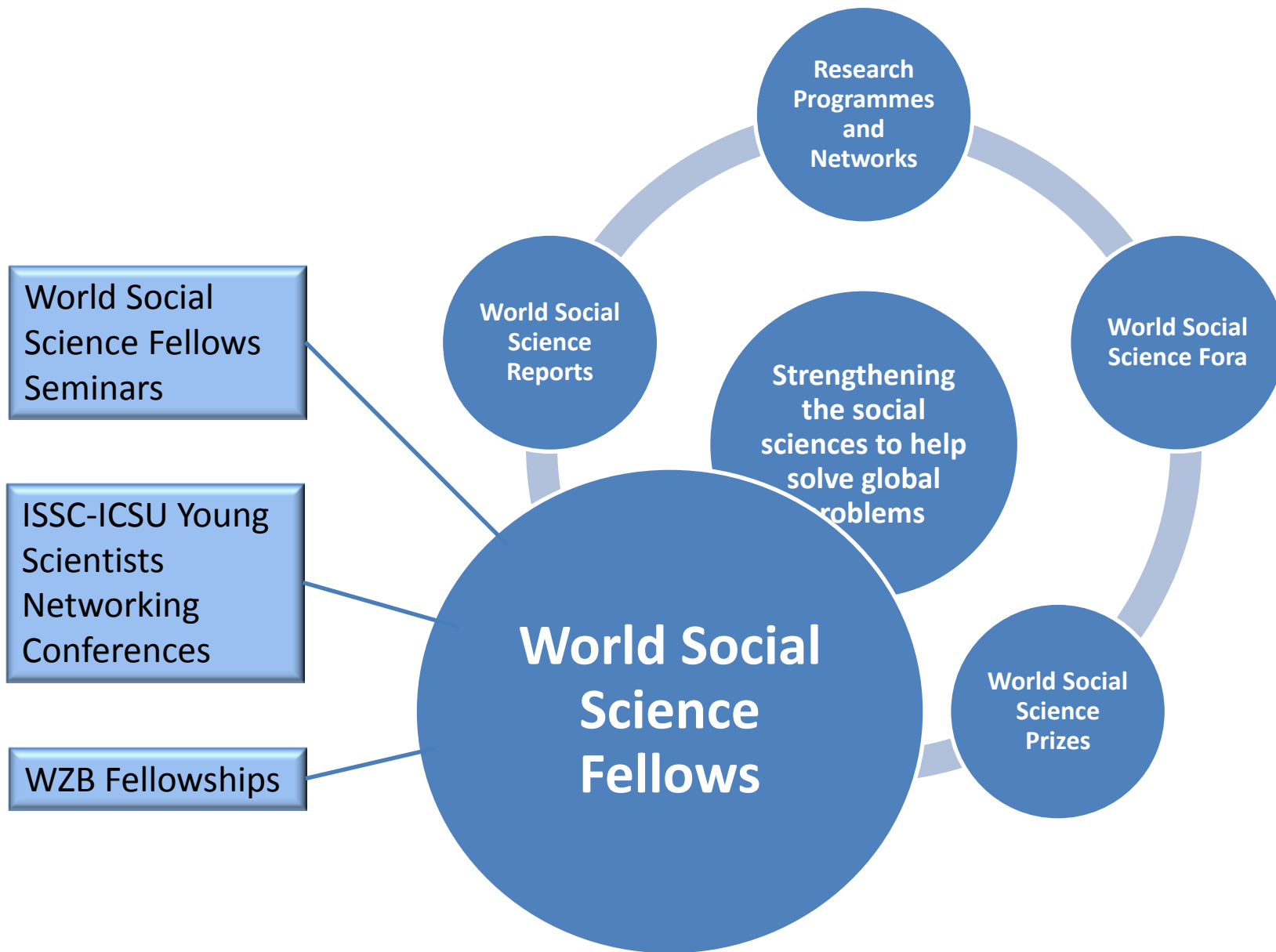
Changing Global Environments

**World Social Science  
Report 2013:  
Changing Global  
Environments**

**Launched Nov 2013 at  
UNESCO, OECD co-  
publishers**

**Available:  
[www.oecd-ilibrary.org/](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/)**









- **Objective** to manage the ISSC's role in global social science capacity development
  - early career scientists, post-doc
  - institutions from lower and middle income countries (LMIC)
  - international research collaboration
  
- **Thematic focus** on interdisciplinary social science knowledge production in global priority areas with particular reference to LMIC
  
- **Fellows' seminars** core component of the programme's work
  - Intensive working meetings
  - 20 competitively selected Fellows work with senior scientists and others



- 1<sup>st</sup> of 3 WSS Fellows Seminars on ***Sustainable Urbanisation***, March 2013, Quito, Ecuador (International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change, Comparative Research on Poverty programme, Host Universidad Andina Simon Bolivar )
- 2<sup>nd</sup>: *Transformations to Sustainability in Urban contexts*, Nov 2014 (Centre for Sustainability Science, Academia Sinica, Center for Global Change and Sustainability Science at National Taipei University)
- 3<sup>rd</sup>: 2015, venue in Africa (Cities Alliance, Stellenbosch Sustainability Centre)





## WSS Fellows Seminar on ***Risk Interpretation and Action***, Dec 2013, Wellington & Christchurch NZ

- Collaboration between the ISSC, Integrated Research on Disaster Risk programme, the IRDR CoE, the START global change capacity programme, Massey University, Canterbury University, and the Royal Society in New Zealand
- Christchurch Maori Council, *Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu*



- *4x \$15,000 seed grants for collaborative research projects – Dec 2014*
  1. *Building more resilient megacities in the developing world: Exploring case studies of Mexico City, Beijing, Lagos and New Delhi*
  2. *Integrating indigenous knowledge into decision-making and policy-making for DRR*
  3. *Multi-scale policy implementation for natural hazard risk reduction: Preliminary results*
  4. *Communication influences on decision-making in disaster recovery and reconstruction: Implications for RIA framework*
  
- *Support for 10 Fellows to attend Beijing IRDR conference: present, writing workshops*



## 28 July – 3 August 2014

- ***Global Social Governance: Developing international social science research and impacting the policy process.***
  - Academy of Social Science, British Council, London School of Economics

## 2015

- ***Cyber research infrastructure for collaborations between natural and social scientists***
  - Earthcube
- 2015 WSS Forum theme - ***Global Relations for a Just World***
  - CODESRIA



## ISSC/ICSU Networking conferences for Young Scientists

Supported by the German Research Foundation (DFG) to stimulate and develop integrated science

- 1<sup>st</sup>: *Food Futures*, May 2013, Villa Vigoni, Italy.
- 2<sup>nd</sup>: *Ecosystems and human well-being in transition towards green economies*, May 2014.
  - Collaboration: International Network of Next Generation Ecologists, Institute for New Economic Thinking's Young Scholars Initiative
- 3<sup>rd</sup>: May 2015, Villa Vigoni, Italy.



## WZB-ISSC Global Fellowship Programme

- Early career social scientists from LMIC working on global priority problems with particular relevance to developing countries.
- 1 Fellow per year - stipend to conduct research for 6 months at WZB Berlin Social Science Research Centre
- 2 Global Fellows selected 2014-15.

*Rio+20 (special grant opportunity):* participated actively in the Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for Sustainable Development and observed the negotiations at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

- Rio+20: 7 articles written thus far.

# Some results since 2012 launch ...



- 550 applications were received - selection of 73 Fellows (anticipated 300 Fellows)
  - 48% from ( LMIC)
  - 60% women
  - 14 senior social scientists
- Publications, university courses/teaching materials, collaborative research proposals and writing projects, career boost
- « *Untamed Urbanism* » book (open access, Routledge)

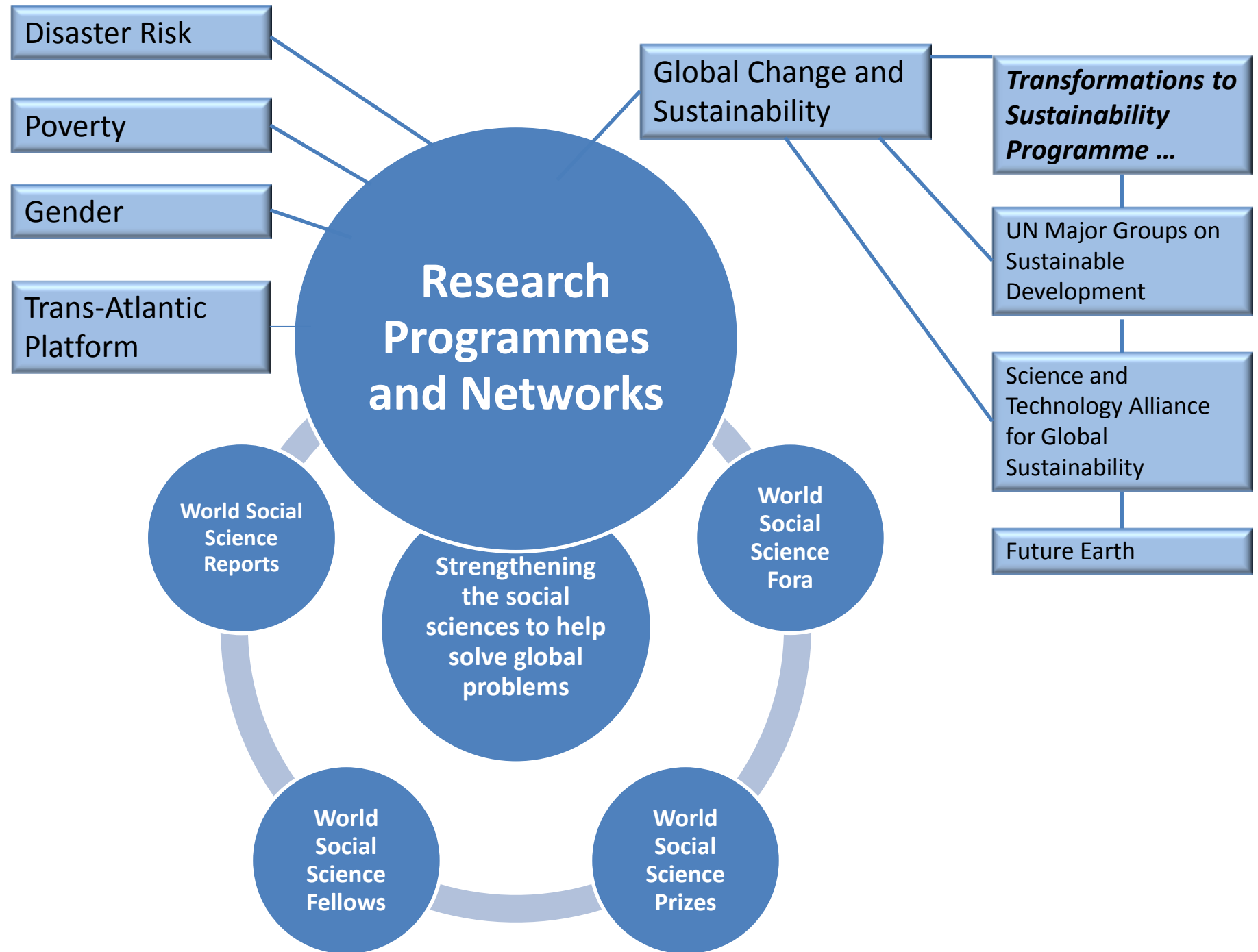




# Lessons learnt to date

- Fellows in the lead
- Towards concrete products
- Integrate participation of societal stakeholders in design stage
- Co-design and organisation with partners
- Post-seminar follow-up support







# Transformations to Sustainability



A new global funding programme on transformations to sustainability  
launched by the ISSC on 31 March 2014.

<http://www.worldsocialscience.org/2014/03/transformations-sustainability/>



## A social science research fund

### *Main objectives*

- **Increase the social science (incl. behavioural and economic sciences) contributions** on the processes of social transformations needed to secure solutions to the problems of global change and sustainability
- **Increase the use of such knowledge** by policy makers, practitioners, the private sector, citizens and activists -
- **Principle:** Social transformation as an overarching, integrative framework - connecting poverty, development and global environmental change research communities
  - **Major contribution** to the work of Future Earth.

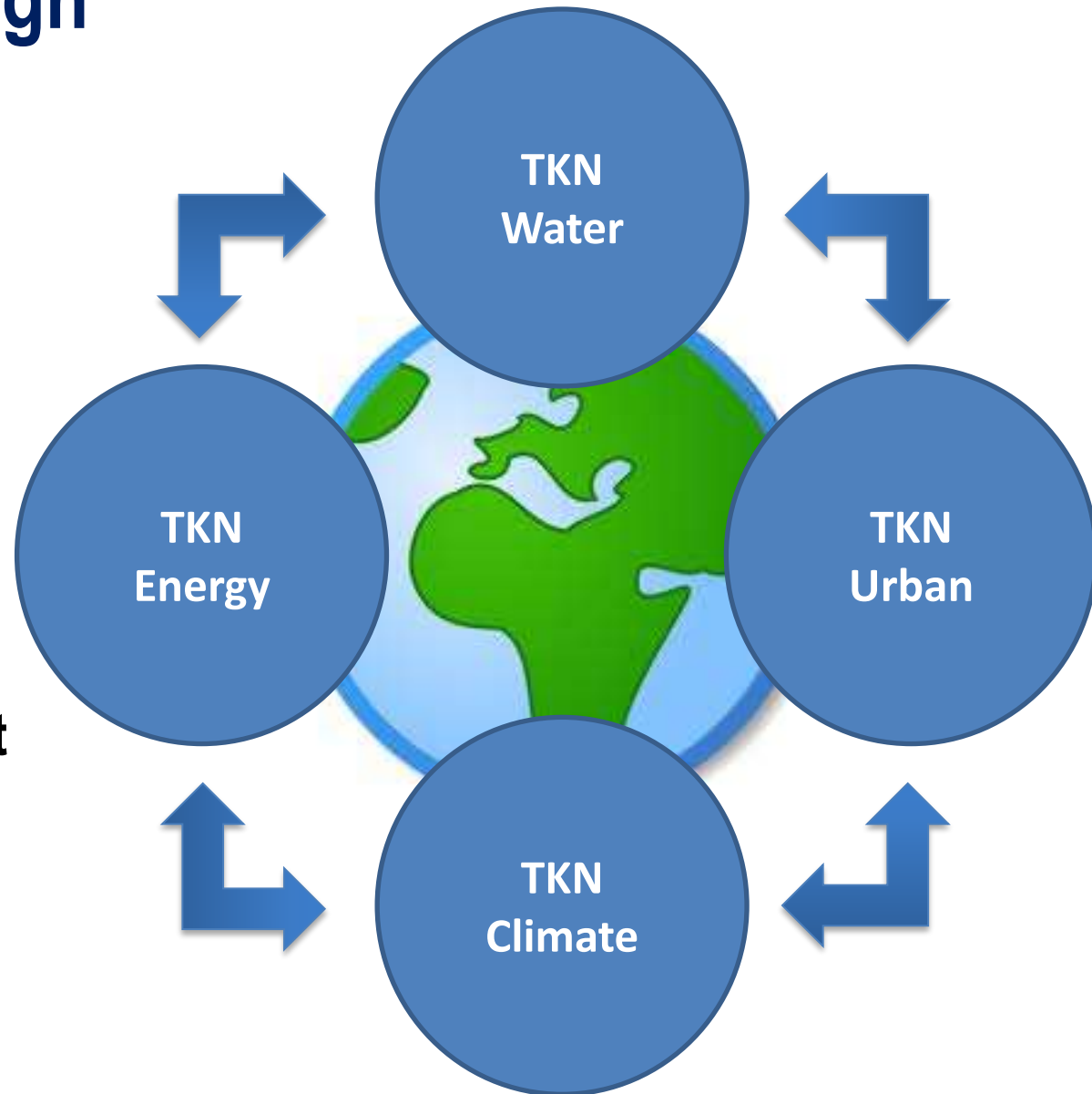
## Programme design

### A series of transformative knowledge networks

- Concrete challenges
- Research, training interaction and outreach

### A global knowledge trust on

- Social transformation
- Transformative science





- Trans-national collaboration involving partners from 3 or more countries, incl. from at least one LMIC
  - Integrated research led by social scientists in concrete contexts of application
  - Engage societal stakeholders as knowledge partners in the co-production and co-dissemination of solutions-oriented knowledge for sustainability
  - Capacity building: one principal investigator or project leader from a LMIC and involvement of early career researchers
- *April 2014: call for pre-proposals (500/30x € 30.000,00 for 6.5 mths)*
  - *1<sup>st</sup> TKN conference, Nov 2014, Postdam*
  - *March 2015 TKN selections (3x € 300.000,00 per year for 3 yrs)*



## Why transdisciplinarity?

Complex global realities

- Inseparability of environmental, social, political and economic problems
- Embeddedness in diverse physical and social practices
- Multiple consequences and increasingly complex risk profiles



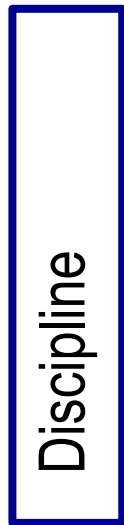
## Unrelenting pressure on science to make a difference

- to provide better understandings of the complexity of the challenges we face,
- to accelerate the production of relevant knowledge,
- to be more effective at meeting user requirements,
- to inform livable, just solutions, and
- to shape deliberate and deliberative policy making and implementation

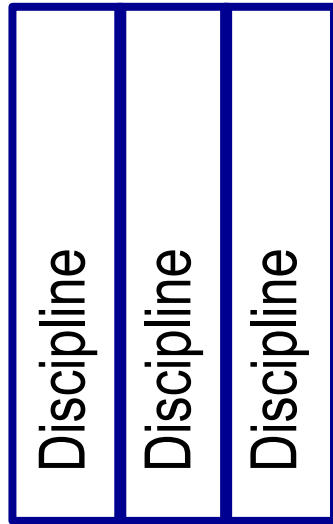


# Transdisciplinarity training

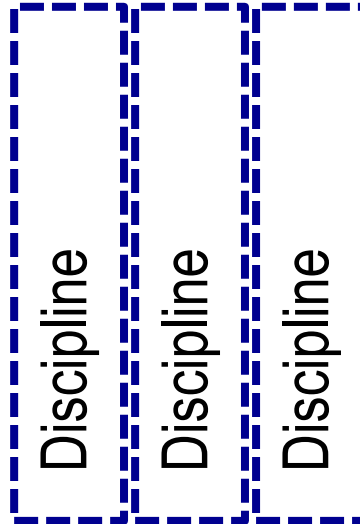
## Supporting transdisciplinarity in research and research management



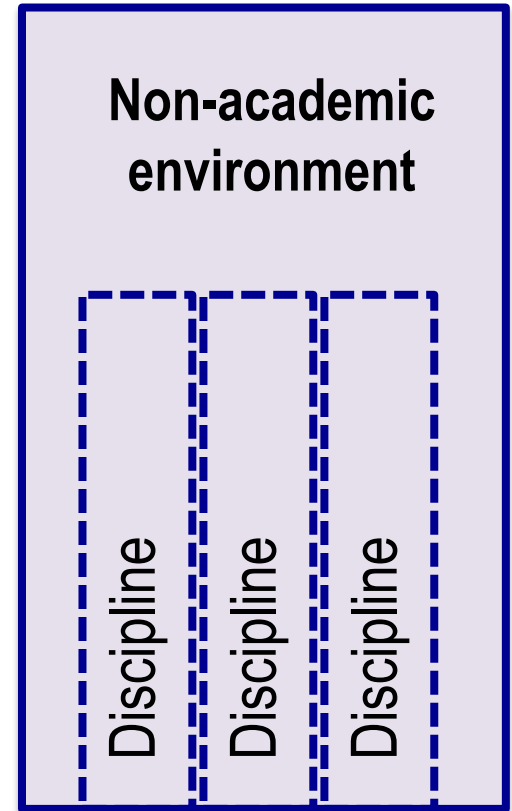
**MONO**



**MULTI**



**INTER**



**TRANS**



## An approach to global knowledge production

- Beyond disciplines
- Problem-solving
- Participatory
- Process-oriented



# Transdisciplinarity training

**A global TD training initiative: 16-18 June 2014, Paris**  
**ISSC with NRF, START, ICSU**

June  
2014

- Expert design workshop

July-Dec  
2014

- Development of training module(s) & fundraising proposal

Feb 2015

- Proposal presentation to donors

2015-17

- Training
- Training

- A generic 5 day training workshop
- Identify best practice cases
- Identify a pool of experts from different regions as potential trainers/contributors
- To consider support, incl hosting of training workshops
- Agree on convening and selection processes, branding
- Max 25 participants (competitively selected?)
- Covering all fields of science
- Covering conceptual and practice dimensions of TD
- Including research management and evaluation module