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# Think Tank Initiative Policy Community Survey 2013

## *Report on Latin America*

January 2014



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- In 2009/10, GlobeScan, a global stakeholder research consultancy, was commissioned by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) as part of the Think Tank Initiative (TTI) to conduct a survey of policy stakeholders in three regions: Africa, South Asia, and Latin America.
- In 2013, the IDRC once again engaged GlobeScan to carry out the Think Tank Initiative Policy Community Survey in the same three regions.
- Through the Policy Community Survey, the Think Tank Initiative aims to:
  - Develop an understanding of the policy community in specific countries
  - Understand the strengths and weaknesses of particular think tanks, as perceived by a subset of the policy community
  - Understand what activities are associated with the success of think tanks in order to help prioritize support strategies such as funding, training, and technical assistance
  - Benchmark and track broad changes in the policy community and perceptions of think tanks in selected countries
- This report presents the results of the Latin American survey. This region was last surveyed in late 2010 and early 2011.
- A global report will be prepared which presents an overview of the findings of the studies undertaken in all regions once they are completed.

- The survey of policy stakeholders was conducted through online, telephone and face to face interviews in 7 Latin American countries, from September 20<sup>th</sup> to December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2013.
- The participating Latin American countries include Bolivia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Paraguay and Peru.
- Respondents were contacted by telephone and given the option to complete the interview over the telephone, face to face or online. The survey was offered in Spanish.
- It is important to note that the online response in Bolivia was far higher than expected. In order to maintain a balance between the countries, the number of completes for Bolivia was weighted down to 40. The table below shows the unweighted value for Bolivia.

		Latin America						
		Bolivia	Ecuador	El Salvador	Guatemala	Honduras	Paraguay	Peru
<b>Total</b>	338	79	43	42	41	41	47	45
<b>Online</b>	146	61	6	17	16	3	24	19
<b>Offline</b>	192	18	37	25	25	38	23	26

- Respondents are from the following sectors:
  - **Government\*:** Senior officials (both elected and non-elected) who are directly involved in or influence policy making.
  - **Non-governmental organization:** Senior staff (local or international) whose mission is related to economic development, environmental issues, and/or poverty alleviation.
  - **Media:** Editors or journalists who report on public policy, finance, economics, international affairs, and/or development, who are knowledgeable about national policy issues.
  - **Multilateral/bilateral organization:** Senior staff from organizations run by foreign governments either individually (bilateral such as DFID, USAID) or as a group (multilateral such as UN agencies, World Bank).
  - **Private sector:** Senior staff working at national and multinational companies.
  - **Research/Academia:** Senior staff at universities, colleges, research institutes, and/or think tanks.
  - **Trade Union Officials:** Senior representatives of national trade unions.
- Stakeholders surveyed are senior level staff in their organizations, and active members of the national policy community, meaning that they develop or influence national government policy.

\*Note: Government officials are referred to as elected government and non-elected government throughout this report.

# Methodology: Sample Summary

## Number of Stakeholders Interviewed by Country, 2013

	Total	Latin America						
		Bolivia*	Ecuador	El Salvador	Guatemala	Honduras	Paraguay	Peru
<b>Total</b>	338	79	43	42	41	41	47	45
Government elected	40	9	7	4	7	6	3	4
Government non-elected	36	5	5	7	5	4	5	5
Media	36	4	3	4	4	6	10	5
Multilateral/bilateral	31	11	3	4	2	2	4	5
NGO	52	15	8	6	9	3	6	5
Private sector	44	7	6	5	5	11	5	5
Research/academia	66	22	7	9	6	3	8	11
Trade Union	33	6	4	3	3	6	6	5

\*In Bolivia, the online response was far higher than anticipated. In order to maintain a balance between the countries, the number of completes for Bolivia was weighted down to 40. The figures shown in the table above are the unweighted figures for Bolivia.

# Methodology: Sample Summary (Cont'd)

## Number of Stakeholders, by Source List, 2013

- Stakeholder sample lists were provided by the IDRC and its TTI grantee organizations, and were supplemented by GlobeScan. GlobeScan stakeholder names were reviewed and approved by the IDRC and grantee organizations. To minimize bias, interviews were conducted with a mixture of people – some sourced by grantee organizations and some sourced by GlobeScan.

		Latin America						
		Bolivia*	Ecuador	El Salvador	Guatemala	Honduras	Paraguay	Peru
	Total							
<b>2013 Total</b>	338	79	43	42	41	41	48	45
<b>2011 Total</b>	290	46	40	40	42	40	40	42
<b>2013 GlobeScan list</b>	1340	599	216	88	35	124	146	132
<b>2013 IDRC &amp; TTI grantee list</b>	1659	536	52	77	141	59	582	212
<b>2011 GlobeScan list</b>	1428	612	209	64	63	48	192	240
<b>2011 IDRC &amp; TTI grantee list</b>	555	100	67	70	81	57	76	104

\*In Bolivia, the online response was far higher than anticipated. In order to maintain a balance between the countries, the number of completes for Bolivia was weighted down to 40. The figures shown in the table above are the unweighted figures for Bolivia.



# Methodology: Sample Summary (Cont'd)

## Number of Respondents, by Source List, 2013

- When looking only at respondents who completed the survey, the source of the contacts at the country level is very similar in terms of distribution between GlobeScan sources and IDRC/grantee sources. The only country where there is a distinguishable difference between the years is Ecuador.

		Latin America						
Total		Bolivia*	Ecuador	El Salvador	Guatemala	Honduras	Paraguay	Peru
2013 Total	338	79	43	42	41	41	47	45
2011 Total	290	46	40	40	42	40	40	42
2013 GlobeScan Source	154	36	31	24	15	20	8	20
2013 IDRC/Grantee Source	184	43	12	18	26	21	39	25
2011 GlobeScan Source	116	23	11	19	19	23	7	14
2011 IDRC/Grantee Source	174	23	29	21	23	17	33	28

\*In Bolivia, the online response was far higher than anticipated. In order to maintain a balance between the countries, the number of completes for Bolivia was weighted down to 40. The figures shown in the table above are the unweighted figures for Bolivia.

- **Views are not representative of the whole policy community.** The study was designed to gather views of *senior* level policy actors within national policy communities on their research needs and their perceptions of think tanks' research quality and performance. The study was not intended to gather perceptions of a larger, representative subset of the policy community which could generate statistically significant findings on demand for research. This approach was chosen consciously, recognizing the limitation it brings to the survey, but acknowledging the value of perceptions of individuals in senior positions within each national policy community who often are very difficult to reach.
- These views then provide the basis for reflection within the organizations supported by TTI on how the organization's current performance is perceived by key stakeholders, and on ways in which the organization may enhance its organizational capacity to undertake policy-relevant research.
- As was done for the Latin American survey in 2011, we set a target of 40 respondents per country with a balanced quota of responses across different stakeholder categories.
- Balanced quotas in each country were achieved with varying degrees of difficulty encountered in the data collection process. **The majority of the sample in 2011 and 2013 are not identical in terms of individual respondents.** However, the make up of the sample in terms of the stakeholder audiences it reflects is similar.

## A Note on Charts:

- All figures reported in the charts are expressed in percentages, unless otherwise noted. Some percentages may not add up to 100% due to the rounding of individual response categories or to the fact that respondents could give multiple answers to a particular question ("total mentions" is then reported).
- Please refer to the notes section on each slide to review actual question wording.

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## Key Findings

## Key Information Needs

***Similar to 2011, information on economic, fiscal or monetary issues, poverty alleviation and education is required most by stakeholders for policy making. Almost half of stakeholders also require information on the environment and human rights. However, interest in all areas has dropped since 2011.***

- The majority of respondents in most stakeholder groups and countries require information on economic, fiscal or monetary issues, poverty alleviation and education to help with national policy making process. Information on foreign affairs continues to receive the least amount of interest overall.
- Across stakeholder groups there is some variance in the level of interest. NGO and Trade Union respondents have a much higher level of interest in human rights issues than any other group, while private sector respondents show more interest than others in trade and industry issues. Respondents from the media tend to show higher levels of interest than other groups for most types of information, in particular information on education, likely reflecting the broad scope of their reporting needs.
- Elected and Non-elected government stakeholders have somewhat similar , wide-ranging informational needs. However, non-elected government stakeholders require more information on foreign affairs, while elected government stakeholders have a stronger interest than others on gender issues.
- Between countries, the information priorities are fairly similar with economic information, poverty alleviation and education information topping the list for most. Respondents in Ecuador are looking for more information on natural resources, while respondents from Guatemala show more interest than others in the environment. There has been a notable decline in interest across most information topics in Guatemala, Paraguay and Peru, while interest has generally increased for most topics in Honduras.

## Information Access

***The perceived ease of obtaining information required to support policy development has changed little since 2011 and is average at best. Information on some subjects of high importance, such as economic, fiscal or monetary issues and human rights, are considered to be the easiest to obtain. However, information on poverty alleviation, one of the most important issues to respondents, is not deemed easy to obtain and the ease of obtaining this information has decreased since 2011. More information is required here to meet respondent needs.***

- According to those surveyed, obtaining information on the environment, natural resources, and agriculture and food security is perceived to be most difficult, while obtaining information on economic, fiscal or monetary issues, trade and industry, and human rights is easiest.
- At the stakeholder level, there is much variance between the groups in terms of the ease of obtaining information. While respondents in research/academia report a decline in information accessibility, those in the private sector and non-elected government report an increase in the ease of obtaining information in many areas.
- At a country level, it appears the availability of information for policy development varies greatly from one nation to the next, with no clear trending across the region. While some countries report a decline in information accessibility, respondents in Guatemala report an increase in the ease of obtaining information in many areas since 2011.

## Information Sources and Distribution Methods

***Publications and reports are used by over eight out of ten respondents to increase their understanding of national policy development. This is followed closely by the use of databases and statistical data banks and discussion with colleagues and peers. Policy briefs are relied on less, but are still used by over six in ten respondents. Email and websites are seen as the best way to share information relating to national policy development.***

- Overall, publications and reports are cited as the most used source of information to increase knowledge of national policy development. Respondents are least likely to turn to books and newsletters to inform policy development.
- Policy briefs (defined as short, targeted analysis of policy) are relied on by about six in ten of those surveyed, most heavily by non-elected government stakeholders and less so among trade union representatives. Overall, stakeholders appear to use a variety of sources of information to increase their understanding of national policy development.
- Elected government, media and research and academia respondents rely most on publications and reports to increase their understanding of national policy development. Non-elected government, multilateral/bilateral and private sector stakeholders also rely heavily on databases and statistical data banks. Respondents from NGOs rely heavily on consulting with experts, while trade union officials and non-elected government often turn to colleagues and peers to understand national policy development.
- Between countries there is not a great deal of variance. Respondents from Paraguay and Guatemala are not as likely as others to use policy briefs.
- Across all Latin American countries and audiences, email and websites are seen as, by far, the best way to share information relating to national policy development. Print is a distant third and other channels tested are used by only small minorities of stakeholders, particularly blogs and radio. Respondents in Ecuador and Honduras are somewhat more oriented than others to social media.

## Organizations Used as a Source of Research-Based Evidence & Familiarity with Think Tanks

***The use of think tanks is relatively strong, but has declined slightly since 2010 in Latin America. There is room for further development in many countries, especially Ecuador and Paraguay where familiarity with think tanks is on the decline.***

- The reliance on relevant government ministries and agencies for research-based evidence has increased among stakeholders from 2011 – these are the most frequently used to inform social and economic policies (54%). International agencies and national think tanks are also used to almost the same degree (52%).
- Respondents are more likely to look to national independent policy research institutes than international ones when looking for information (52% vs 46%), and the use of think tanks overall has declined somewhat since 2001.
- Industry associations, local and national NGOs, and university-based research institutes continue to be used less frequently by respondents.
- Primary sources vary greatly by stakeholder group. National think tanks are the primary source of research-based evidence for respondents from the media, multilaterals, NGOs, and trade unions (albeit only among 33% of trade unions). International think tanks are often used by respondents from non-elected government, NGOs and multilaterals, but are less often used by elected government and trade unions.
- At the country level, respondents in El Salvador, Peru, and Guatemala are strong users of national think tanks, and the use of think tanks is up substantially in Bolivia. However, national think tanks are used by less than half of respondents in Ecuador, Honduras and Paraguay. El Salvador is the only country that has respondents who report a relatively higher reliance on international think tanks.
- Familiarity with think tanks has improved considerably since 2011 amongst stakeholders from Guatemala, Bolivia, and El Salvador and declined in Paraguay and Ecuador. Word-of-mouth and media exposure are most effective in bolstering think tank familiarity.

## Quality of Information

***As in 2011, stakeholders turn to national and international think tanks due to the high quality of their work, as well as the relevance of the research to their needs. International think tanks in particular are highly rated for research quality.***

- Similar to 2011, when stakeholders were asked why they turn to specific organizations for their information needs, almost all say they choose the organization because it produces high quality research and research that is relevant to their needs.
- International university-based research institutes and international think tanks are rated highest in quality according to respondents, followed by international agencies and national think tanks. However, ratings are down compared to 2011 for international agencies and think tanks, while quality ratings for international university-based research institutes are up.
- Generally, local/national organizations do not rate as highly as international ones when it comes to perceived research quality (exceptions are media respondents and respondents in Guatemala, who rate national think tanks higher than international).
- While stakeholders frequently draw on government ministries/agencies and government-owned research institutes for information, there are clear concerns about the quality of the research from these organizations (both receive high quality ratings by only a third of respondents who use them). Accessibility or a national focus may be driving use here.



## Strengths and Areas for Improvement

***Think tanks are perceived to be providers of high quality research with high quality staff, but many believe that partnerships with policy makers and policy actors outside of government could be improved.***

- Across all countries, respondents believe think tanks provide a rich programme of high quality research (although perhaps less so in Ecuador) and are knowledgeable about the process of policy development. Respondents also believe that they maintain high quality research staff with good regional knowledge, as was seen in 2011.
- However, partnerships are clearly an area requiring attention: according to stakeholders, think tanks perform worst in terms of developing effective partnerships with policy makers and partnering effectively with policy actors outside of government. Having adequate infrastructure to function effectively and having an innovative approach to research are also areas of perceived weakness.
- Lessons learned from highly rated think tanks, such as those in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and Peru, could be adapted and applied by others to help improve the perceived quality of research and innovative approach to research, among others.

## Advice for Think Tanks

***Stakeholder advice for national think tanks is similar across stakeholder audiences and countries. It centres around three themes: better communication of research results, increasing relevancy of research, and improving the credibility of research by being non-political and conducting research in a transparent manner.***

- Accessibility and dissemination of research is a key recommendation among stakeholders. Think tanks are encouraged to connect more with other institutions in order to reach a greater audience and benefit society. They are also urged to make their reports more understandable, presenting research findings in a more audience-friendly manner.
- Respondents believe it is important that research conducted by think tanks be relevant and aligned with the needs of the country, with recommendations that policy makers can actively use and implement. Several stakeholders say they would like to see less of a market-focus in the research and more coverage of social issues.
- Think tanks are encouraged to improve the credibility of their research by improving the quality and rigour of their methodology, while being more forthcoming about their sources of information and more transparent overall. Stakeholders also believe that think tanks should be more open to receiving criticism and be willing to debate findings from their research. Finally, a number of respondents urge think tanks to become more neutral and politically independent.

# Summary of Key Findings

	7-country Latin American average	Bolivia	Ecuador	El Salvador	Guatemala	Honduras	Paraguay	Peru
% that use policy briefs	57	67	58	64	49	66	32	69
% that use national think tanks as primary source of info (4+5 out of 5)	53	51	37	69	61	37	47	67
% that use international think tanks as primary source of info (4+5 out of 5)	46	49	35	71	44	41	38	47
Quality of research provided by national think tanks (% saying excellent: 4+5 out of 5)	58	55	39	58	78	56	37	83
Quality of research provided by international think tanks (% saying excellent: 4+5 out of 5)	70	69	61	75	66	76	60	82
Familiarity with think tanks (% rating very familiar: 4+5 out of 5 – average across all TTs tested)	56	33	33	74	85	59	44	68
Think tank performance on specific measures (see slide notes for measures)	--	Below avg.	Below avg.	Above avg.	Above avg.	Above avg.	Below avg.	Above avg.

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## **Information Required for Policy Making in Latin America: Type, Accessibility, Source**

# Types of Information Required for Policy Making

The majority of respondents are looking for information on economic, fiscal or monetary issues, as well as poverty alleviation and education, to help with their involvement in the national policy making process. Interest in a number of areas has declined somewhat since 2011.

## SLIDE 22 – by Latin America total

- Respondents were asked what information they require to support their current direct or indirect involvement with national policy making processes. As was the case in 2011, respondents are most likely to say they require information on poverty alleviation (63%) and on economic, fiscal and monetary issues (66%), with information related to education ranking as the third most important (60%). It is notable that expressed need for information has declined for all areas since 2011.
- Information related to foreign affairs continues to rank as the least important type of information (35%).

## SLIDE 23 – by stakeholder type

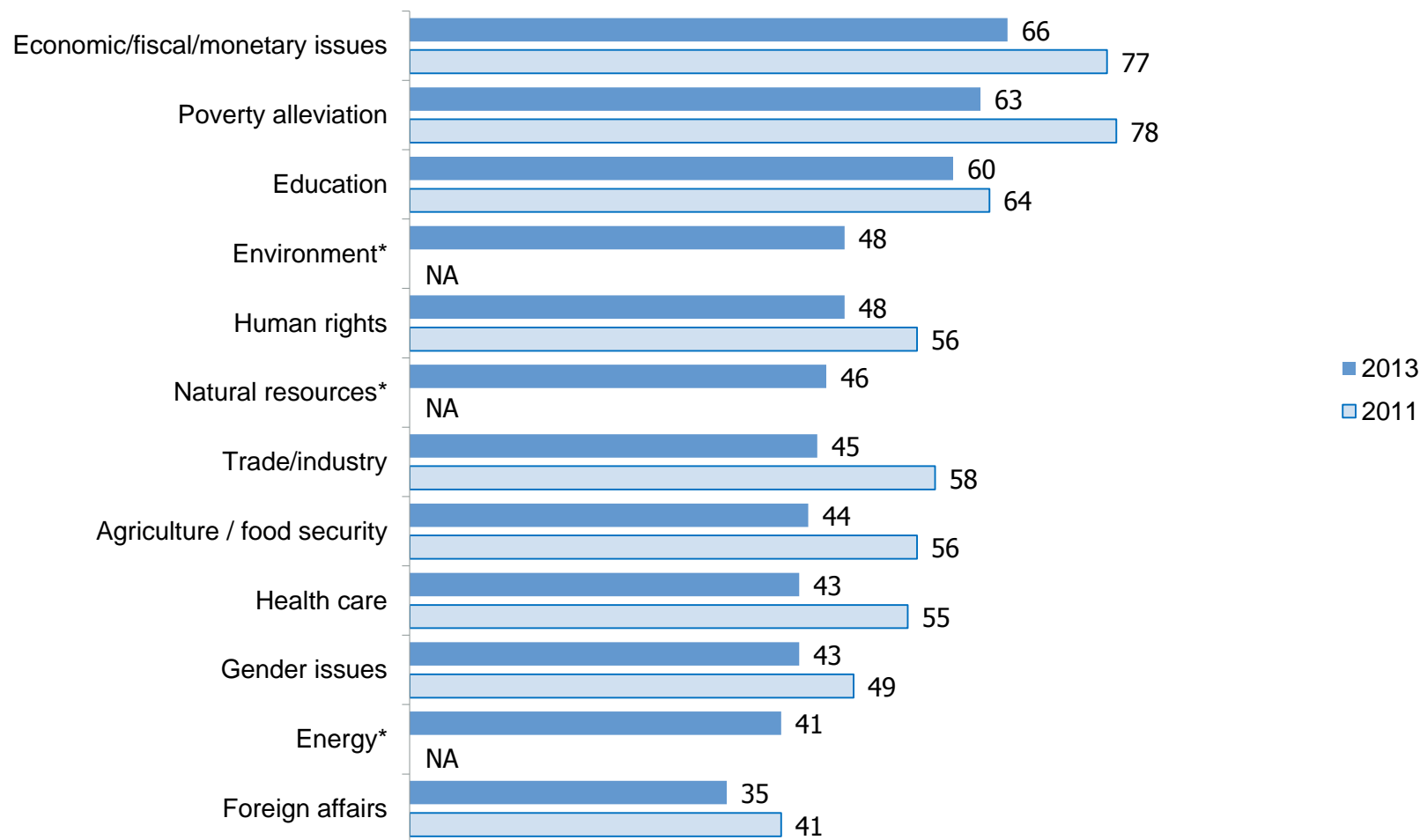
- All stakeholder groups, with the exception of NGOs and trade unions, are highly interested in information about economic and fiscal issues, with non-elected government, multilaterals, and academics reporting poverty alleviation as the second most important type of information. Respondents from the media are most likely to seek education information, while those from NGOs are most likely to seek poverty and human rights information. Trade unions are highly interested in human rights, as well as health care, while the private sector is more likely than others to look at trade/industry information.
- While stakeholders generally report lower levels of interest compared to 2011 in many areas, NGOs and private sector companies on the other hand, are increasingly interested in information related to education, while respondents in elected government report an increase in reliance on information related to economic or fiscal issues, and trade or industry. Academia show increased interest in food security.

## SLIDE 24 – by country

- For respondents in most countries, information about economic and fiscal issues is requested the most for policy making. Respondents in Peru and Bolivia however, report information about poverty alleviation as the most important. Respondents in Honduras express greater interest in all types of information compared to 2011.

# Types of Information Required for Policy Making

Prompted, Latin America, 2011–2013





\* “Environment”, “natural resources”, and “energy” were combined in to one response option in 2011 (selected by 68% of 22 respondents), but were segmented in 2013.

# Types of Information Required for Policy Making

Prompted, by Stakeholder Type, Latin America, 2011–2013

	Overall average 2013	Elected government	Non-elected government	Media	Multilateral/ bilateral	NGO	Private sector	Research/ academia	Trade Union
Economic/fiscal issues	66 ▼	69 ▲	72	76 ▼	65	54 ▼	74	67	47 ▼
Poverty alleviation	63 ▼	69	61 ▼	66 ▼	61 ▼	76 ▼	54 ▼	62 ▼	50 ▼
Education	60	55 ▼	46	81	65 ▼	69 ▲	42 ▲	67 ▼	53 ▼
Environment*	48	52	46	62	49	60	46	37	30
Human rights	48	49	42	51 ▼	41 ▼	75	30	27 ▼	78
Natural resources*	46	46	43	54	43	54	47	42	32
Trade/industry	45 ▼	46 ▲	55	57	39 ▼	28 ▼	67 ▼	37 ▼	28 ▼
Agriculture / food security	44 ▼	38 ▼	39 ▼	53	37 ▼	61 ▼	38	47 ▲	32 ▼
Gender issues	43	51	36 ▼	41	55 ▼	61	26	29	52 ▼
Health care	43 ▼	41	33 ▼	65 ▼	55	46	31	29 ▼	55 ▼
Energy*	41	46	31	62	35	39	46	33	33
Foreign affairs	35	38	54	49	37	37	38 ▲	19 ▼	17 ▼

 Top mention  
 Second mention

▲ Increase of 10% or more from 2011 to 2013

▼ Decrease of 10% or less from 2011 to 2013

\* “Environment”, “natural resources”, and “energy” were combined in to one response option in 2011 (selected by 68% of respondents), but were segmented in 2013.

# Types of Information Required for Policy Making

Prompted, by Country, Latin America, 2011–2013

	Overall average 2013	Bolivia	Ecuador	El Salvador	Guatemala	Honduras	Paraguay	Peru
Economic/fiscal issues	66 ▼	63	63 ▼	79	63 ▼	83 ▲	60 ▼	51 ▼
Poverty alleviation	63 ▼	66	63 ▼	76	51 ▼	68	52 ▼	67 ▼
Education	60	57	51	69	49 ▼	73 ▲	56	64 ▼
Environment*	48	38	56	60	34	51	38	56
Human rights	48	29 ▼	56	52	54 ▼	63 ▲	29 ▼	53 ▼
Natural resources*	46	46	63	40	39	51	35	44
Trade/industry	45 ▼	28 ▼	58	67	41 ▼	63 ▲	33 ▼	24 ▼
Agriculture / food security	44 ▼	41	56	52	39 ▼	41	46 ▼	36 ▼
Gender issues	43	38	49 ▲	48	44 ▼	56 ▲	21 ▼	44 ▼
Health care	42 ▼	38	33 ▼	57	37 ▼	54 ▲	25 ▼	56 ▼
Energy*	41	35	49	50	32	61	27	31
Foreign affairs	35	15	53 ▲	40	32 ▼	63 ▲	17 ▼	29 ▼



Top mention

Second mention

▲ Increase of 10% or more from 2011 to 2013

▼ Decrease of 10% or less from 2011 to 2013

\* “Environment”, “natural resources”, and “energy” were combined in to one response option in 2011 (selected by 68% of respondents), but were segmented in 2013.



# Ease of Obtaining Information to Support Policy Development

The perceived ease of obtaining information is average at best, and has remained fairly stable since 2011. Only poverty alleviation has become more difficult to obtain since 2011 – a problem as this is an area of high interest to respondents.

## SLIDE 26 – by Latin America total

- When asked to think of the information required to support policy development, respondents believe that information about economic or fiscal issues, trade and industry, human rights, and gender issues is the easiest to obtain, while information about the environment, natural resources and agriculture or food security is the most difficult. Respondents believe that information related to poverty alleviation has become less accessible relative to 2011.

## SLIDE 27 – by stakeholder type

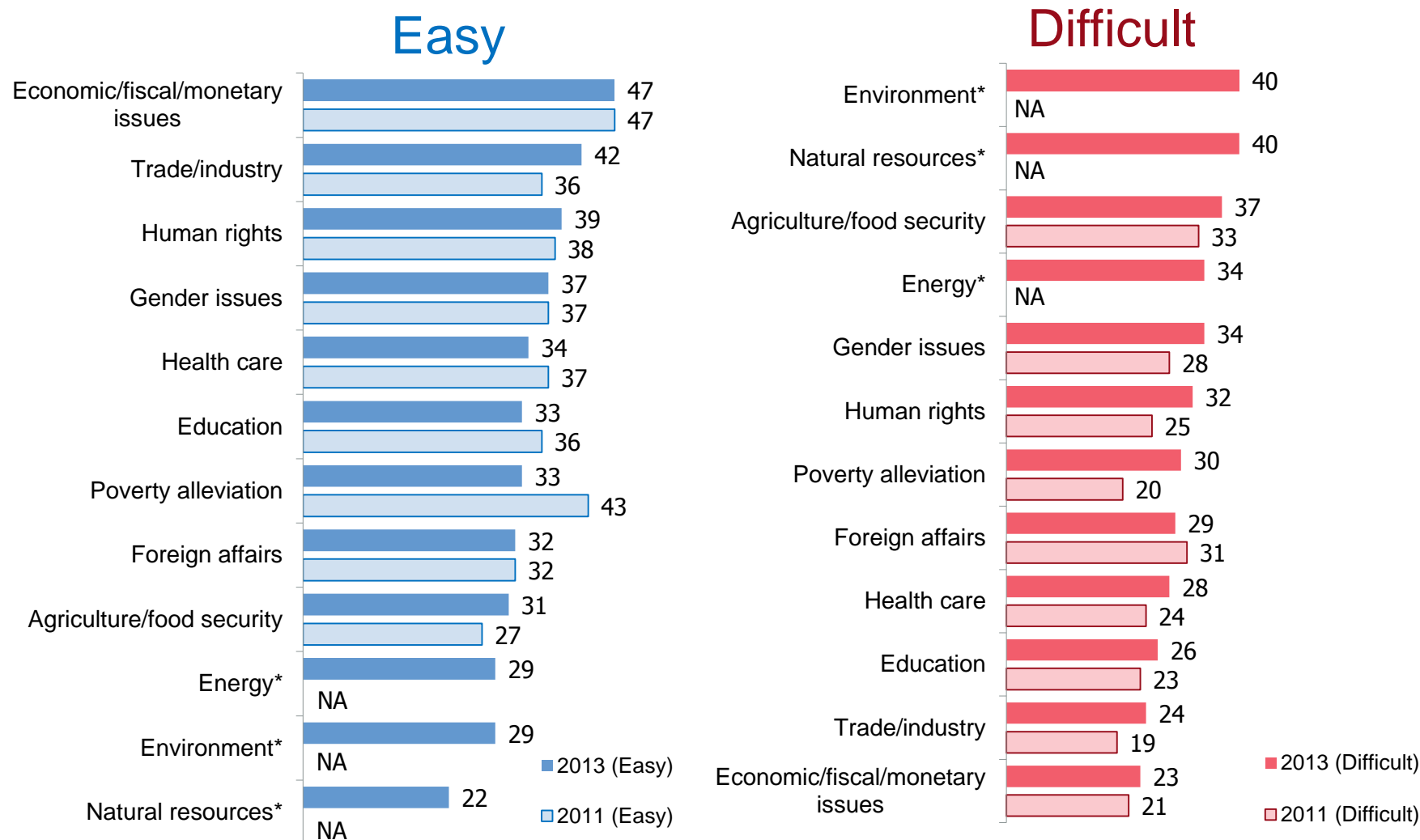
- Ease of access varies greatly by stakeholder group. Respondents in the media, private sector companies and trade unions believe that obtaining information about gender issues is the easiest, while those in non-elected government and research believe information about economic and fiscal issues is the most accessible to support policy development. Elected government officials and multilaterals report information about health care as the most accessible, while NGOs point to trade/industry information.
- While respondents in research/academia report a decline in information accessibility, those in the private sector and non-elected government report an increase in the ease of obtaining information in many areas.

## SLIDE 28 – by country

- Stakeholders in Bolivia, Guatemala and Paraguay believe information about economic or fiscal issues to be the easiest to obtain, while those in El Salvador and Peru report information about trade or industry as the most accessible. Respondents in Honduras find gender information easiest to obtain, while those in Ecuador point to education.
- While some countries report a decline in information accessibility, respondents in Guatemala report an increase in the ease of obtaining information in many areas.

# Ease of Obtaining Information to Support Policy Development in Following Areas

Percent Selecting “Easy” (4+5) and “Difficult” (1+2), Latin America, 2011–2013




Subsample: Those who say they require information about this particular issue for their work ( $n=120-226$  in 2011,  $n=105-196$  in 2013)

\* “Environment”, “natural resources”, and “energy” were combined in one response option in 2011 (48% selected “easy” (4+5) and 21% selected “difficult” (1+2), but were segmented in 2013).

# Ease of Obtaining Information to Support Policy Development in Following Areas

Percent of Respondents Selecting “Easy” (4+5),  
by Stakeholder Type, Latin America, 2011–2013

	Overall average 2013	Elected government	Non-elected government	Media	Multilateral/ bilateral	NGO	Private sector	Research/ academia	Trade Union
Economic/fiscal issues	47	45	74 ▲	52 ▲	24 ▼	42	53 ▲	55	0 ▼
Trade/industry	42	42 ▼	46 ▲	56 ▲	15	48 ▲	50	27 ▼	24
Human rights	39	51 ▲	54 ▲	49	24	33	42 ▲	40 ▼	30
Gender issues	37	31 ▼	17 ▼	64 ▲	25	28 ▼	57 ▲	34	52 ▲
Health care	34	52	54 ▲	18 ▼	61 ▲	37	24	16 ▼	24
Education	33	46 ▲	48 ▲	22 ▼	39	43	24 ▲	24 ▼	31
Poverty alleviation	33 ▼	29	40 ▼	44	45	29 ▼	27 ▲	40 ▼	7 ▼
Foreign affairs	32	44	37	24	32	24	39	14 ▼	40 ▲
Agriculture / food security	31	48 ▲	50 ▲	33	42 ▲	30	19	25	0 ▼
Energy*	29	36	29	33	50	20	38	14	20
Environment*	29	30	26	38	44	32	11	24	33
Natural resources*	22	30	21	22	23	25	26	17	11

 Top mentioned

▲ Increase of 10% or more from 2011 to 2013

 Least mentioned

▼ Decrease of 10% or less from 2011 to 2013


Subsample: Those who say they require information about this particular issue for their work ( $n=120-226$  in 2011,  $n=105-196$  in 2013)

\* “Environment”, “natural resources”, and “energy” were combined in one response option in 2011, but were segmented in 2013

# Ease of Obtaining Information to Support Policy Development in Following Areas

Percent of Respondents Selecting “Easy” (4+5),  
by Country, Latin America, 2011–2013

	Overall average 2013	Bolivia	Ecuador	El Salvador	Guatemala	Honduras	Paraguay	Peru
Economic/fiscal issues	47	34	26	52 ▲	69 ▲	38 ▼	61 ▲	52 ▼
Trade/industry	42	23	24 ▼	54 ▲	65 ▲	42 ▼	27	55 ▲
Human rights	39	30 ▼	29	27	55 ▲	58	21	42
Gender issues	37	20	24	40	39	61 ▲	30	35
Health care	34	13 ▼	29 ▲	33 ▼	40	45 ▲	33	36
Education	33	18 ▼	41 ▲	38 ▲	45 ▲	37 ▼	15 ▼	41
Poverty alleviation	33 ▼	23	37 ▼	38 ▼	43	25 ▼	17 ▼	50 ▼
Foreign affairs	32	8	13 ▼	41	38 ▲	42	43 ▲	31
Agriculture / food security	31	6	13	41	44 ▲	53	29	38 ▲
Energy*	29	18	19	48	38	32	8	36
Environment*	29	17	29	36	29	48	17	24
Natural resources*	22	8	7	24	38	52	12	20

 Top mentioned

 Least mentioned

▲ Increase of 10% or more from 2011 to 2013

▼ Decrease of 10% or less from 2011 to 2013

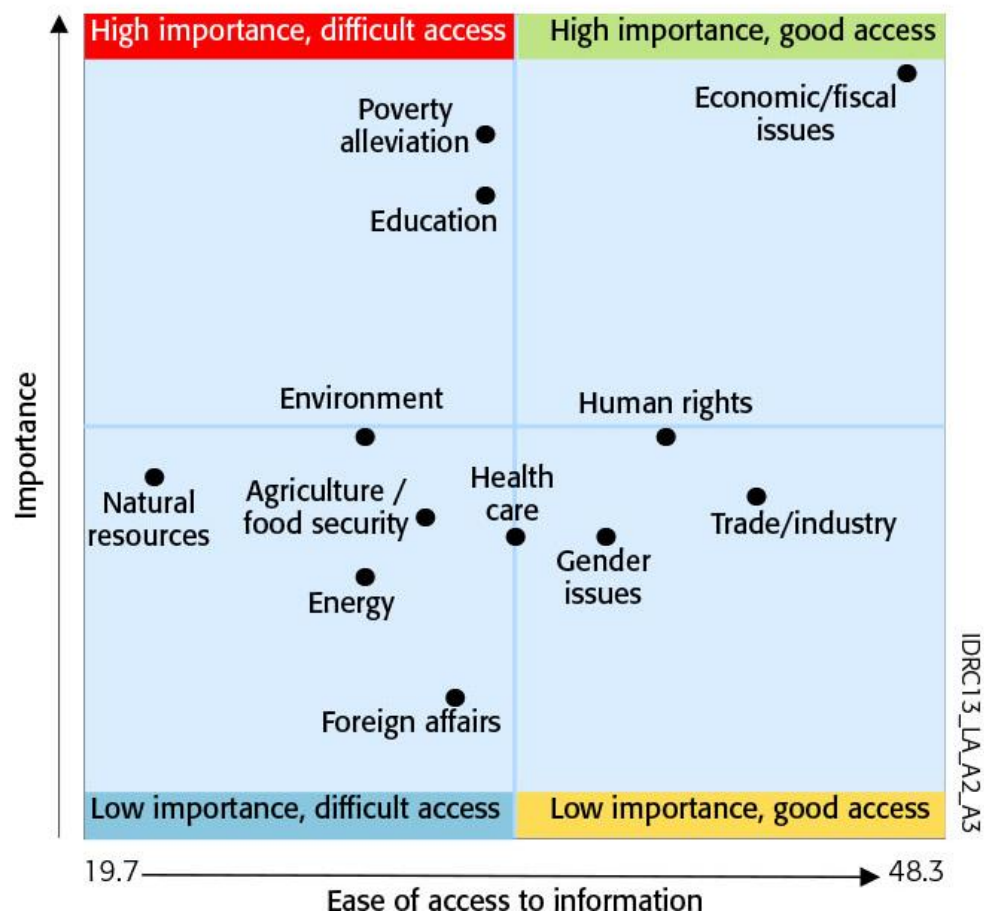
Subsample: Those who require information about this particular issue for their work ( $n=120-226$  in 2011,  $n=105-196$  in 2013)

\*“Environment”, “natural resources”, and “energy” were combined in one response option in 2011, but were segmented in 2013

# Importance vs Ease of Access to Information

Total Mentions vs Respondents Selecting “Easy” (4+5), Latin America, 2013

Information on poverty alleviation and education are perceived to be of great importance, but difficult to access (ease of access to poverty alleviation information has declined substantially since 2011). More information is required here to meet respondent needs.



**Publications and reports are the primary information source used by respondents to inform their understanding of national policy development. Six in ten report using policy briefs.**

## **SLIDE 31 – by Latin America total**

- Publications and reports are the predominant source of information used to increase respondent understanding of national policy development (82%), followed by databases and statistical data banks (76%) and in-person events such as discussion with colleagues (73%) and consulting with experts (70%). Six in ten report using policy briefs.
- Books and newsletters are the least likely information source to be used to inform policy development.

## **SLIDE 32 – by stakeholder type**

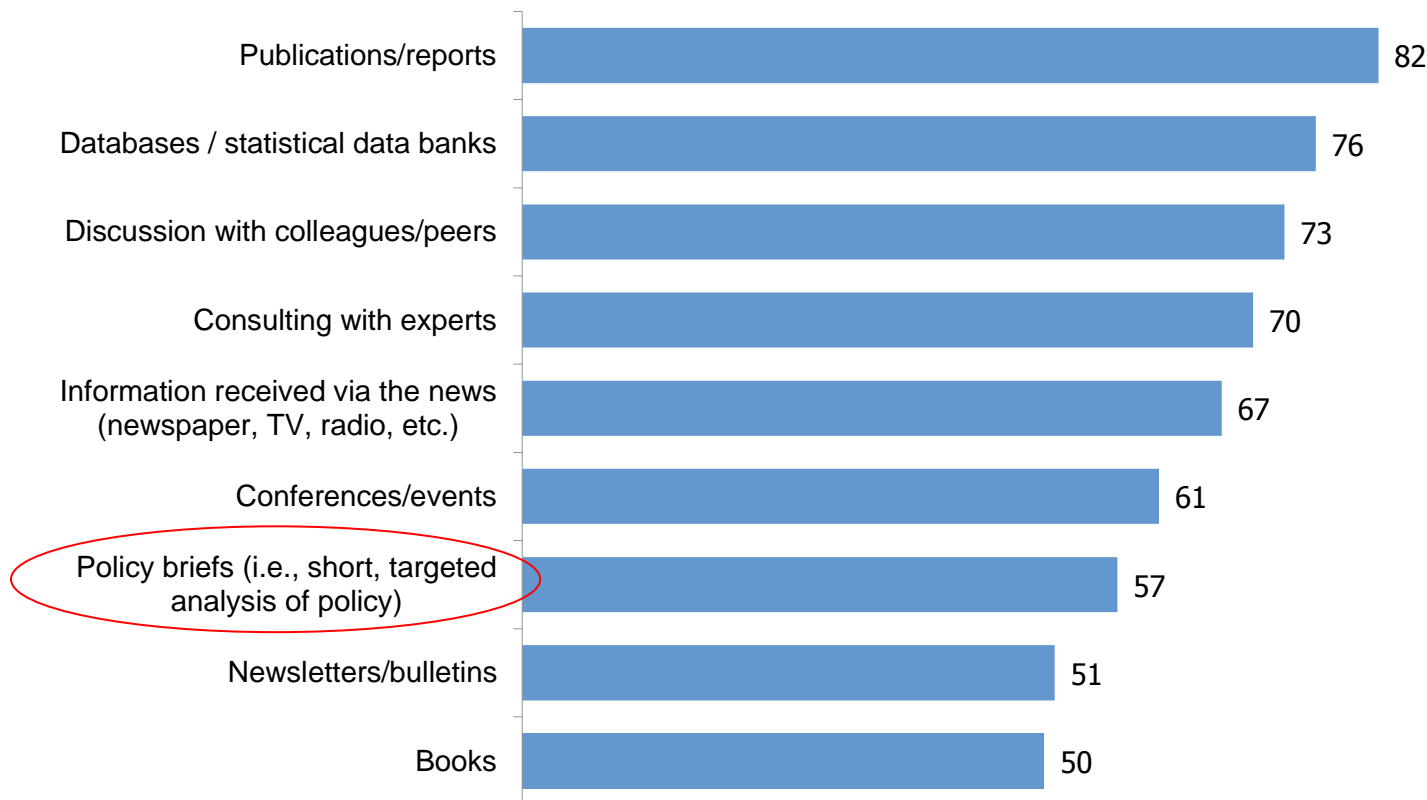
- Among those surveyed, elected government, media, and academic respondents say they use publications/reports most regularly. Respondents in non-elected government, multilateral organizations, and private sector companies use statistical databases as their primary information source for policy development, while NGOs and trade unions are more likely to rely on personal consultations and discussions.
- Trade unions are the least likely to rely on policy briefs to inform policy development (35%) and use is also lower among private sector respondents (48%). Majorities in all other groups do use policy briefs – this is particularly the case with non-elected government (73%).

## **SLIDE 33 – by country**

- In most countries, over six in ten respondents rely on policy briefs to inform policy development, especially in Peru (69%) and Bolivia (67%). Respondents in Paraguay (32%) and Guatemala (49%) are the least likely to use policy briefs as a source of information.

# Information Source Used to Increase Understanding for National Policy Development



Prompted, Latin America, 2013



# Information Source Used to Increase Understanding for National Policy Development

Prompted, by Stakeholder Type, Latin America, 2013

	Overall average 2013	Elected government	Non-elected government	Media	Multilateral/ bilateral	NGO	Private sector	Research/ academia	Trade Union
Publications/reports	82	83	88	85	82	81	80	88	62
Databases / statistical data banks	76	70	91	72	84	58	81	84	65
Discussion with colleagues/peers	73	63	90	68	63	83	74	70	72
Consulting with experts	70	69	72	74	82	91	64	58	55
Information received via the news (newspaper, TV, radio, etc.)	67	72	75	81	51	71	67	49	83
Conferences/events	61	52	72	68	61	52	54	69	57
Policy briefs (i.e., short, targeted analysis of policy)	57	65	73	53	61	63	48	59	35
Newsletters/bulletins	51	56	70	53	37	35	64	40	60
Books	50	47	61	44	35	58	43	58	47

 Most used  
 Least used



# Information Source Used to Increase Understanding for National Policy Development

Prompted, by Country, Latin America, 2013

	Overall average 2013	Bolivia	Ecuador	El Salvador	Guatemala	Honduras	Paraguay	Peru
Publications/reports	82	82	86	74	78	90	70	93
Databases / statistical data banks	76	73	67	76	85	73	72	82
Discussion with colleagues/peers	73	62	67	67	63	88	74	89
Consulting with experts	70	59	74	74	78	76	49	82
Information received via the news (newspaper, TV, radio, etc.)	67	59	67	60	68	83	64	71
Conferences/events	61	58	56	57	61	66	49	78
Policy briefs (i.e., short, targeted analysis of policy)	57	67	58	64	49	66	32	69
Newsletters/bulletins	51	37	58	45	41	76	36	64
Books	50	59	58	40	44	59	28	67

 Most used  
 Least used

# Most Useful Format for Receiving Information for National Policy Development

**In Latin America, email and websites are seen as the best way to share information relating to national policy development. Radio and blogging have almost no traction.**

## **SLIDE 35 – by Latin America total**

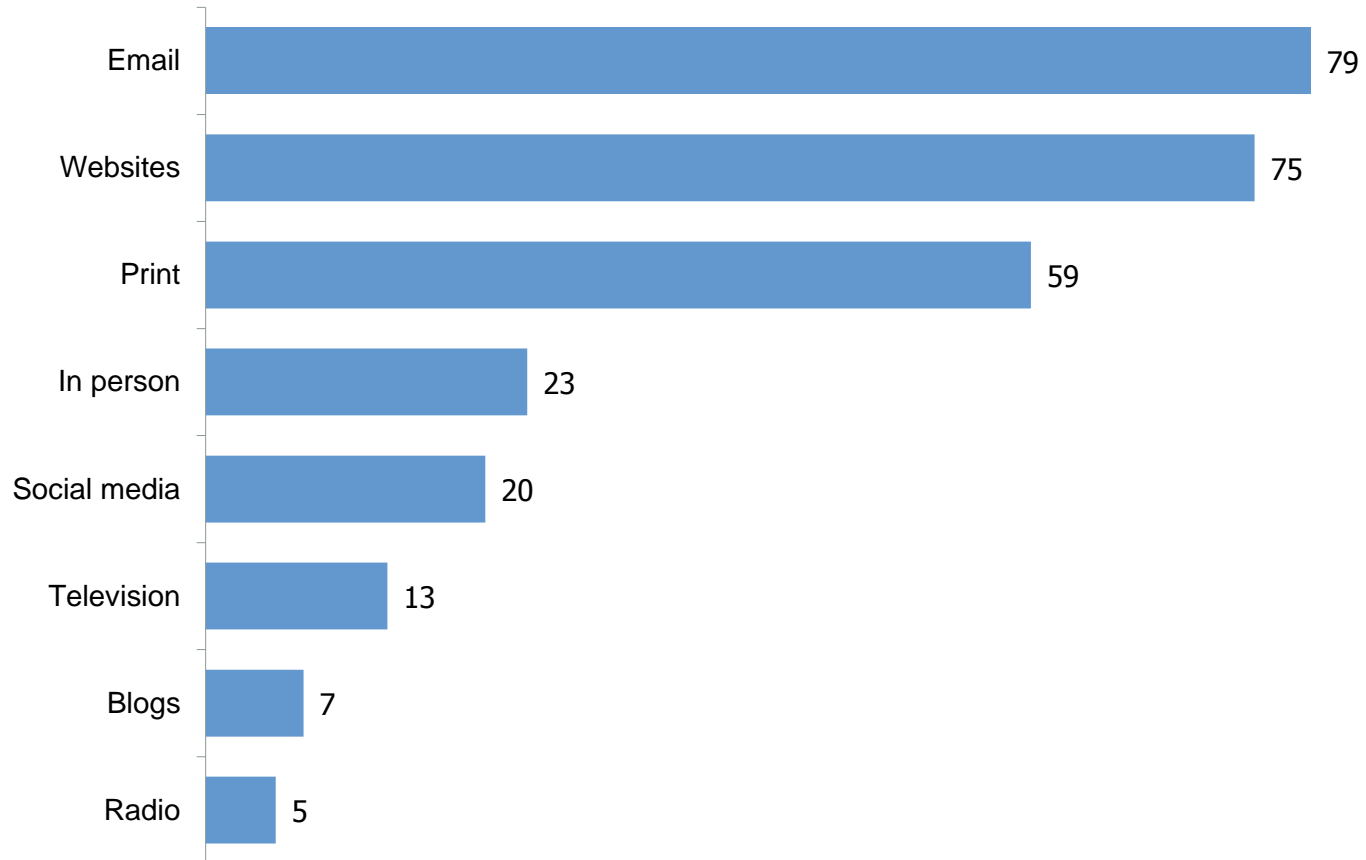
- When asked what format they find most useful for receiving information for national policy development, three-quarters of respondents point to email and websites, well ahead of any other format. Print is selected by 58% of respondents to receive information. Other channels tested are used by only small minorities of people, particularly blogs (7%) and radio (5%).

## **SLIDE 36 and 37 – by stakeholder type and by country**

- The most and least preferred formats to acquire information does not vary substantially from one stakeholder type to another, other than the fact that academics seem less likely than others to use television as a source of information.
- Differences in opinion between countries are also minimal, with websites and email seen as most useful format across the majority of countries. Respondents in Ecuador and Honduras are somewhat more oriented than others to social media. Guatemalan respondents are more likely than others to rely on print media, while those El Salvador, Guatemala and Peru rely more than others on in-person conversations.

# Most Useful Format for Receiving Information for National Policy Development



Prompted, Could Select Up to Three Responses, Latin America, 2013



# Most Useful Format for Receiving Information for National Policy Development

Prompted, Could Select Up to Three Responses, by Stakeholder Type, Latin America, 2013



	Overall average 2013	Elected government	Non-elected government	Media	Multilateral/ bilateral	NGO	Private sector	Research/ academia	Trade Union
Email	79	80	82	57	94	76	80	82	82
Websites	75	63	78	60	78	79	74	92	67
Print	59	52	57	49	65	60	63	68	50
In person (face to face or telephone)	23	25	28	29	16	31	27	15	13
Social Media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter)	20	17	12	34	20	25	19	12	27
Television	13	21	9	26	4	9	12	0	28
Blogs	7	3	15	9	6	7	1	5	8
Radio	5	7	6	18	0	0	2	1	8

 Most useful  
 Least useful

# Most Useful Format for Receiving Information for National Policy Development

Prompted, Could Select Up to Three Responses, by Country, Latin America, 2013

	Overall average 2013	Bolivia	Ecuador	El Salvador	Guatemala	Honduras	Paraguay	Peru
Email	79	80	84	83	85	68	87	64
Websites	75	70	74	86	63	76	81	76
Print	59	61	51	62	76	51	45	67
In person (face to face or telephone)	23	20	26	29	29	15	17	29
Social Media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter)	20	16	28	14	12	29	19	20
Television	13	13	23	2	0	29	9	13
Blogs	7	11	0	2	12	2	6	11
Radio	5	6	5	0	2	15	4	2

 Most useful  
 Least useful

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# **Research-Based Evidence in the National Policy Context: Availability, Relevance and Quality**

# Types of Organizations Used as a Source of Research-Based Evidence

**The use of think tanks is relatively strong, but has declined slightly since 2010 in Latin America. There is room for further development in many countries, especially Ecuador and Honduras.**

## **SLIDE 40 – By Latin America total**

- Relevant government ministries/agencies, international agencies, and national independent policy research institutes are the top three sources of research-based evidence related to social and economic policies (each were used by over half of respondents). This is followed by government-owned research institutes and international think tanks. Respondents are more likely to look to national independent policy research institutes than international ones when looking for information (52% vs 46%).
- The use of think tanks has declined somewhat since 2001, as has the use of international agencies, while the use of relevant government ministries/agencies is up.
- Respondents are least likely to use industry associations as a source of research-based evidence.

## **SLIDE 41 – By stakeholder type**

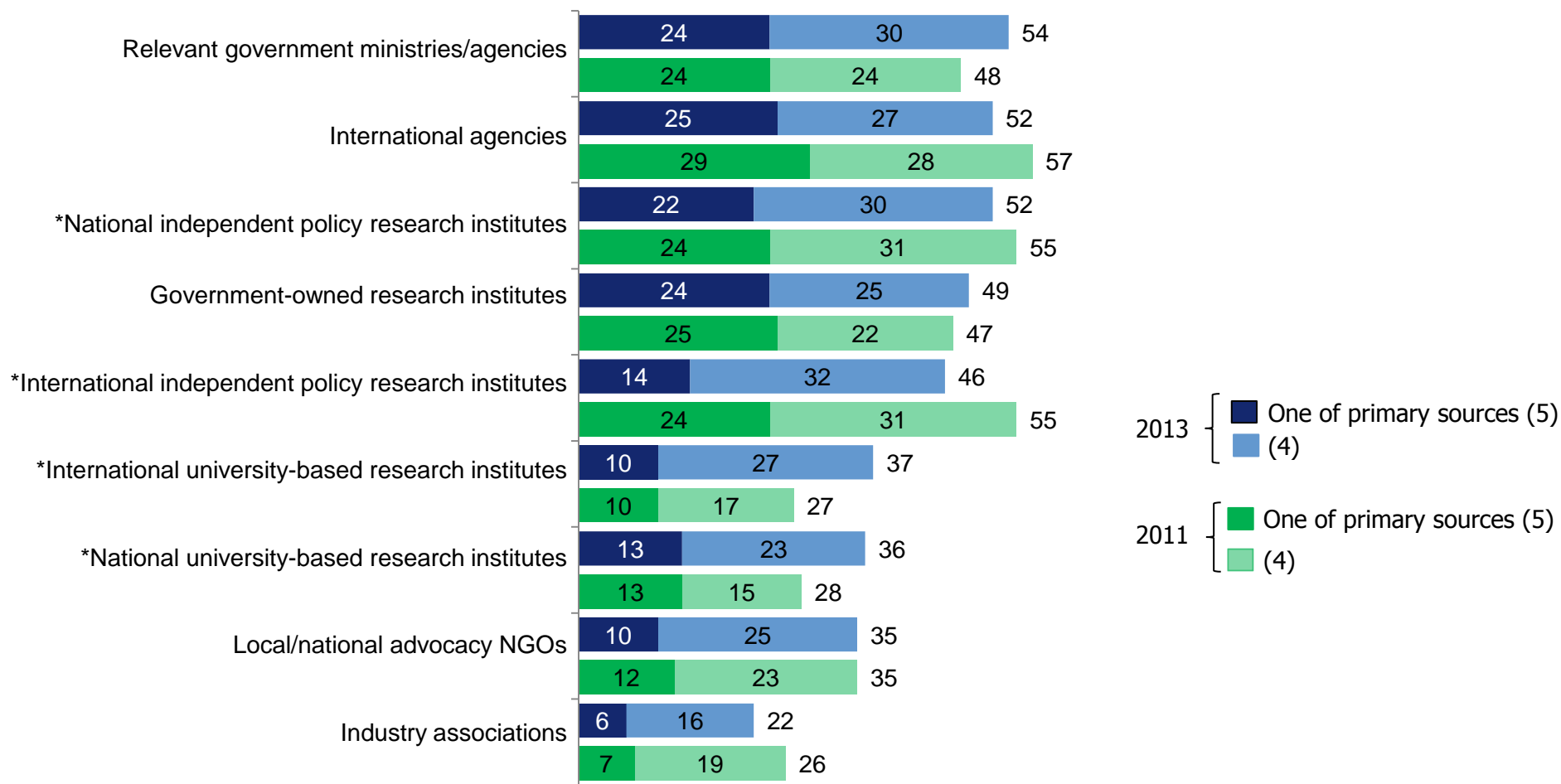
- Primary sources vary greatly by stakeholder group. National think tanks are the primary source of research-based evidence for respondents from the media, multilaterals, NGOs, and trade unions (albeit only among 33% of trade unions). International think tanks are often used by respondents from non-elected government, NGOs and multilaterals, but are less often used by elected government and trade unions.

## **SLIDE 42 – By country**

- As was the case in 2011, respondents in El Salvador, Peru, and Guatemala are strong users of national think tanks. Use of think tanks is also up substantially in Bolivia. However, national think tanks are used by less than half of respondents in Ecuador, Honduras and Paraguay, with respondents in Ecuador and Honduras being far less likely than in 2011 to say they use think tanks.
- International think tanks are strongly used in El Salvador (71%), but less so elsewhere.
- Compared to 2011, the reported use of international university-based research institutes has increased in five out of seven countries.

# Types of Organizations Used as a Source of Research-Based Evidence

Percent of Respondents Selecting “Primary Source” (4+5), Latin America, 2011–2013



\* “Independent policy research institute” was included as one response option in 2011, but was segmented further into “National” and “International” options in the 2013 survey. The 2011 data is therefore repeated across the National and International samples for general comparability.



# Types of Organizations Used as a Source of Research-Based Evidence

Percent of Respondents Selecting “Primary Source” (4+5),  
by Stakeholder Type, Latin America, 2011–2013

	Overall average 2013	Elected government	Non-elected government	Media	Multilateral/ bilateral	NGO	Private sector	Research/ academia	Trade Union
Relevant government ministries/agencies	54	52 ▲	75 ▲	46 ▼	61	58	60 ▲	48	28
International agencies	52	48 ▲	66	47	69	54 ▼	49	55 ▼	33
National independent policy research institutes*	52	41	58	63	73	61	42	53	33
Government-owned research institutes	49	54	61 ▲	34	65	61	44	48 ▲	27 ▼
International independent policy research institutes*	46	27	63	40	57	60	49	47	25
International university-based research institutes	37 ▲	28	37	26	55 ▲	45	26	54 ▲	18
National university-based research institutes	36	48 ▲	40 ▲	40	37 ▲	53 ▲	10 ▼	30	28
Local/national advocacy NGOs	35	24	22	54	27	60	27	27	30
Industry associations	22	13 ▼	9 ▼	50	20	19	46 ▼	15	7

 Organization used most often

 Organization used least often
























▲ Increase of 10% or more from 2011 to 2013



▼ Decrease of 10% or less from 2011 to 2013



\* “Independent policy research institute” was included as one response option in 2011, but was segmented further into “National” and “International” options in the 2013 survey.

# Types of Organizations Used as a Source of Research-Based Evidence

Percent of Respondents Selecting “Primary Source” (4+5),  
by Country, Latin America, 2011–2013

	Overall average 2013	Bolivia	Ecuador	El Salvador	Guatemala	Honduras	Paraguay	Peru
Relevant government ministries/agencies	54	38	53	57	63 	59 	43	62 
International agencies	52	46	35 	62	68 	56 	51 	51
National independent policy research institutes*	52	51	37	69	61	37	47	67
Government-owned research institutes	49	51	60 	50	49 	46	43	47
International independent policy research institutes*	46	49	35	71	44	41	38	47
International university-based research institutes	37 	43 	44	43 	39 	22 	32 	38 
National university-based research institutes	36	38	42	21 	56 	46 	9	40 
Local/national advocacy NGOs	35	30	28	43	32	39	36	33 
Industry associations	22	16 	28	26	17	41	21	7 

 Organization used most often  
 Organization used least often

 Increase of 10% or more from 2011 to 2013  
 Decrease of 10% or less from 2011 to 2013

\* “Independent policy research institute” was included as one response option in 2011, but was segmented further into “National” and “International” options in the 2013 survey.

# Reasons for Turning to Specific Organization Mentioned, as a Source of Research-Based Evidence

**When looking for information related to social and economic policy, stakeholders tend to turn to national and international think tanks because of the high quality of their work, as well as the relevance of the research to their needs.**



## **SLIDE 44 – By Latin America total**

- When stakeholders were asked why they turn to specific organizations for their information needs, almost all mention the quality of research and the relevance of the research to their needs as their top two reasons. Mentions of “research relevance” have increased significantly since 2011.
- Sources that are less likely to be recognized for high quality research include local/national NGOs, government agencies, and government-owned research institutes.
- National think tanks and international university-based research institutes have notably higher than average perceptions of the quality of their staff/researchers.
- Compared to 2011, there are less respondents who said they focused on a particular source because they were the “only type of organization available”. This suggests that respondents feel there is now more choice in sources when looking for information related to social and economic policy.
- Only 33 respondents across all the Latin American markets surveyed say they do not turn to think tanks for research-based evidence. Four in ten of these say this is due to a lack of familiarity with such institutes. About a quarter of the respondents who don’t use think tanks say they meet their research through other sources (23%), while others believe that the quality of research either does not meet their needs (14%) or that the research recommendations not relevant enough for them (6%).

# Reasons for Turning to Specific Organization Mentioned, as a Source of Research-Based Evidence

By Organization Type, Latin America, 2011–2013

	Overall average 2013		Government-owned research institutes (n=72)		Relevant government ministries/agencies (n=72)		National independent policy research institutes (n=66)		International independent policy research institutes (n=43)		International agencies (n=76)		National university-based research institutes (n=39)		International university-based research institutes (n=31)		Local/national advocacy NGOs (n=30)		Industry associations (n=18)	
Relevance of research to needs	40	▲	41		50	▲	27		37		42	▲	33		23		61	▲	47	▲
High quality of research	29		13		13		41		48		39		36		46		7	▼	22	
High quality of staff/researchers	10		3		1		23		10		13		13		21	▼	10		0	▼
Personal Contact	5		6		5		4		2		0		9		7		5		11	
Only type of organization that is familiar	4		3		7		1		0		0		3		3		10		6	
Only type of organization available	3	▼	11	▼	6	▼	0		0		2		4	▼	0		3		0	▼

 Top mention  
 Second mention

▲ Increase of 10% or more from 2011 to 2013  
▼ Decrease of 10% or less from 2011 to 2013

Subsample: Those who say they use type of institute as a primary source of policy information

\* “Independent policy research institute” was included as one response option in 2011, but was segmented further into “National” and “International” options in the 2013 survey.

# Quality Ratings of Research

**International think tanks are very highly rated in terms of the quality of research they provide to stakeholders to work on national policy issues. National think tanks receive above average ratings when compared to all organization types.**

## **SLIDE 47 – By Latin America total**

- International university-based research institutes and international think tanks are rated highest in quality according to respondents, followed by international agencies and national think tanks. Ratings are down compared to 2011 for international agencies and think tanks, however.
- Local/national organizations do not rate as highly as international ones when it comes to perceived research quality.
- While stakeholders frequently draw on government ministries/agencies and government-owned research institutes for information, there are clear concerns about the quality of the research from these organizations (both receive high quality ratings by only a third of respondents who use them).

## **SLIDE 48 – By stakeholder type**

- International think tanks receive first or second place ranking by all stakeholder types for quality. National think tanks receive top quality rankings by media and second place rankings by NGOs.
- The private sector respondents rated international agencies the highest. However, stakeholder ratings of quality for international agencies have decreased significantly overall since 2011.
- Non-elected government, NGOs, and trade unions gave their top ratings to international university-based research institutes. Ratings have improved for international university-based research institutes from almost half of the stakeholder types since 2011.

## **SLIDE 49 – By country**

- International think tanks received first or second place rankings for quality in all countries except Guatemala, where national think tanks receive better quality ratings. National think tanks are also highly rated in Peru.
- Ratings for international agencies are down in most countries but have increased considerably in Guatemala since 2011.

## SLIDE 50 – By stakeholder type

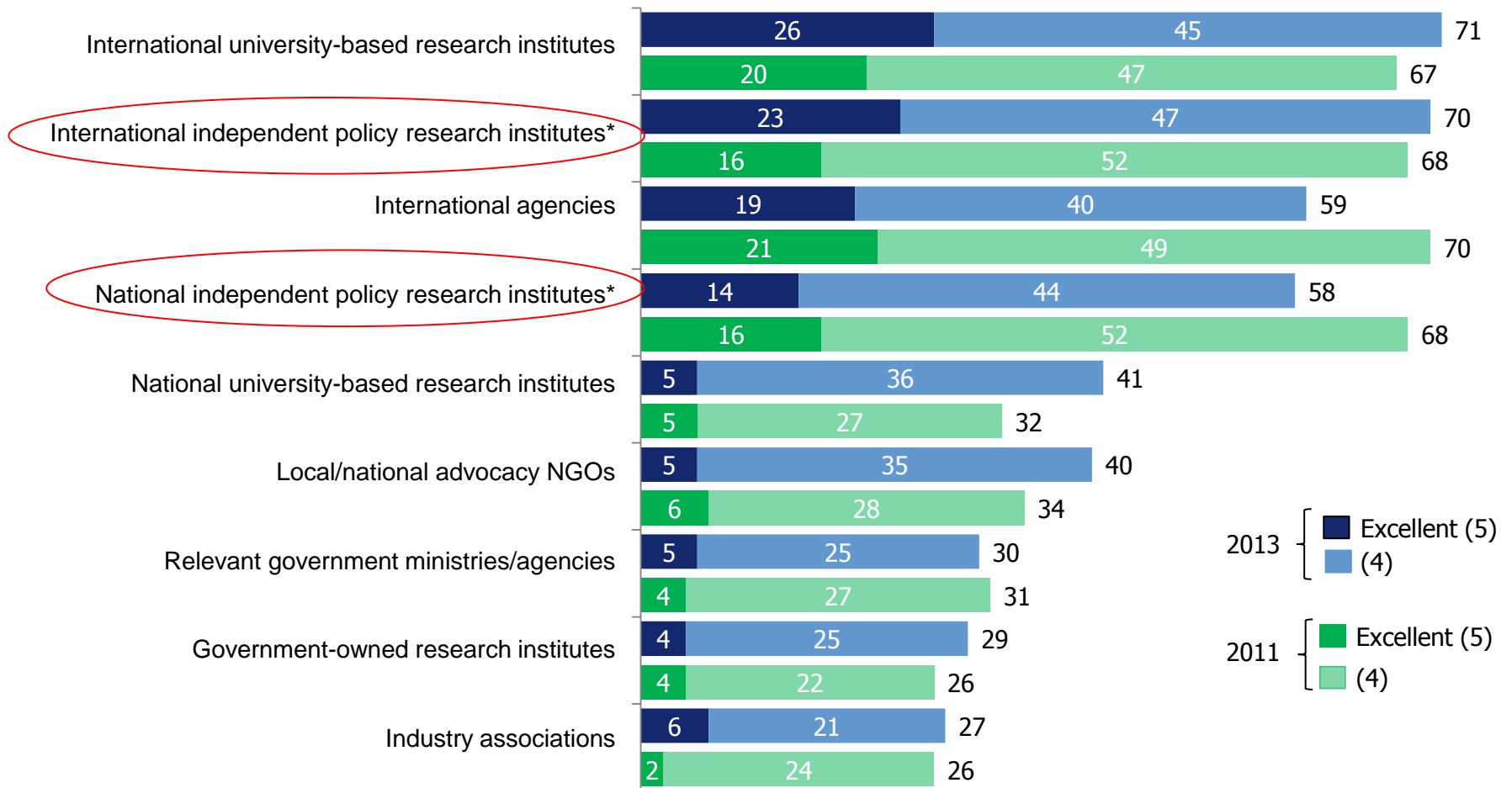
- International think tanks received better quality ratings than national think tanks from almost all surveyed stakeholders, except media respondents where no difference in quality is perceived.
- Think tank quality ratings have generally declined among respondents from the private sector, research/academia, and multilaterals. They have improved among elected government respondents.

## SLIDE 51 – By country

- Respondents in Guatemala rate national think tanks considerably higher in quality than international think tanks. In all other countries, international think tanks receive higher ratings than national. Only in Peru are both types of think tanks rated the same.
- Stakeholders from Paraguay and Ecuador give the lowest quality ratings to national think tanks (less than four in ten).
- Think tank quality ratings have improved in Guatemala since 2011, but remain relatively stable elsewhere.

# Quality Ratings of Research Provided by...

Latin America, 2011–2013





Subsample: Those who use each type of organization (n=210–262 in 2011, n=205–276 in 2013)

\* “Independent policy research institute” was included as one response option in 2011, but was segmented further into “National” and “International” options in the 2013 survey. The 2011 data is therefore repeated across the National and International samples for general comparability.

# Quality Ratings of Research Provided by...

Percent of Respondents Selecting “Excellent” (4+5),  
by Stakeholder Type, Latin America, 2011–2013

	Overall average 2013	Elected government	Non- elected government	Media	Multilateral/ bilateral	NGO	Private sector	Research/ academia	Trade Union
International university-based research institutes	71	65	78	69	86	72	66	65	73
International independent policy research institutes*	70	69	76	71	87	72	67	66	54
International agencies	59	50	66	55	74	50	69	59	52
National independent policy research institutes*	58	60	53	72	57	64	45	57	51
National university-based research institutes	41	50	55	37	40	47	26	29	62
Local/national advocacy NGOs	40	43	34	62	33	46	29	32	41
Relevant government ministries/agencies	30	41	44	33	18	29	37	17	24
Government-owned research institutes	29	53	46	19	24	28	32	19	13
Industry associations	27	39	11	41	13	22	51	4	30

 Top rating  
 Second rating

▲ Increase of 10% or more from 2011 to 2013  
▼ Decrease of 10% or less from 2011 to 2013

Subsample: Those who use each type of organization (n=210–262 in 2011, n=205–276 in 2013)



\* “Independent policy research institute” was included as one response option in 2011, but was segmented further into “National” and “International” options in the 2013 survey. The 2011 data is therefore repeated across the National and International samples for general comparability.



# Quality Ratings of Research Provided by...

Percent of Respondents Selecting “Excellent” (4+5),  
by Country, Latin America, 2011–2013

	Overall average 2013		Bolivia	Ecuador	El Salvador	Guatemala	Honduras	Paraguay	Peru
International university-based research institutes	71		75	70	75	67 ▲	68	64	78 ▲
International independent policy research institutes*	70		69	61	75	66	76	60	82
International agencies	59 ▼		55 ▼	44 ▼	66	72 ▲	69 ▼	51 ▼	55 ▼
National independent policy research institutes*	58		55	39	58	78	56	37	83
National university-based research institutes	41		39	50 ▲	26	56 ▲	50	22	43 ▲
Local/national advocacy NGOs	40		32	31 ▲	50 ▲	39 ▲	56	38	33
Relevant government ministries/agencies	30		15	28 ▲	35	35 ▲	38 ▼	23 ▼	35
Government-owned research institutes	29		20 ▼	41 ▲	26	30 ▲	27 ▼	24 ▼	33
Industry associations	27		18	27	29	38 ▲	45	18 ▼	12 ▼

 Top rating  
 Second rating

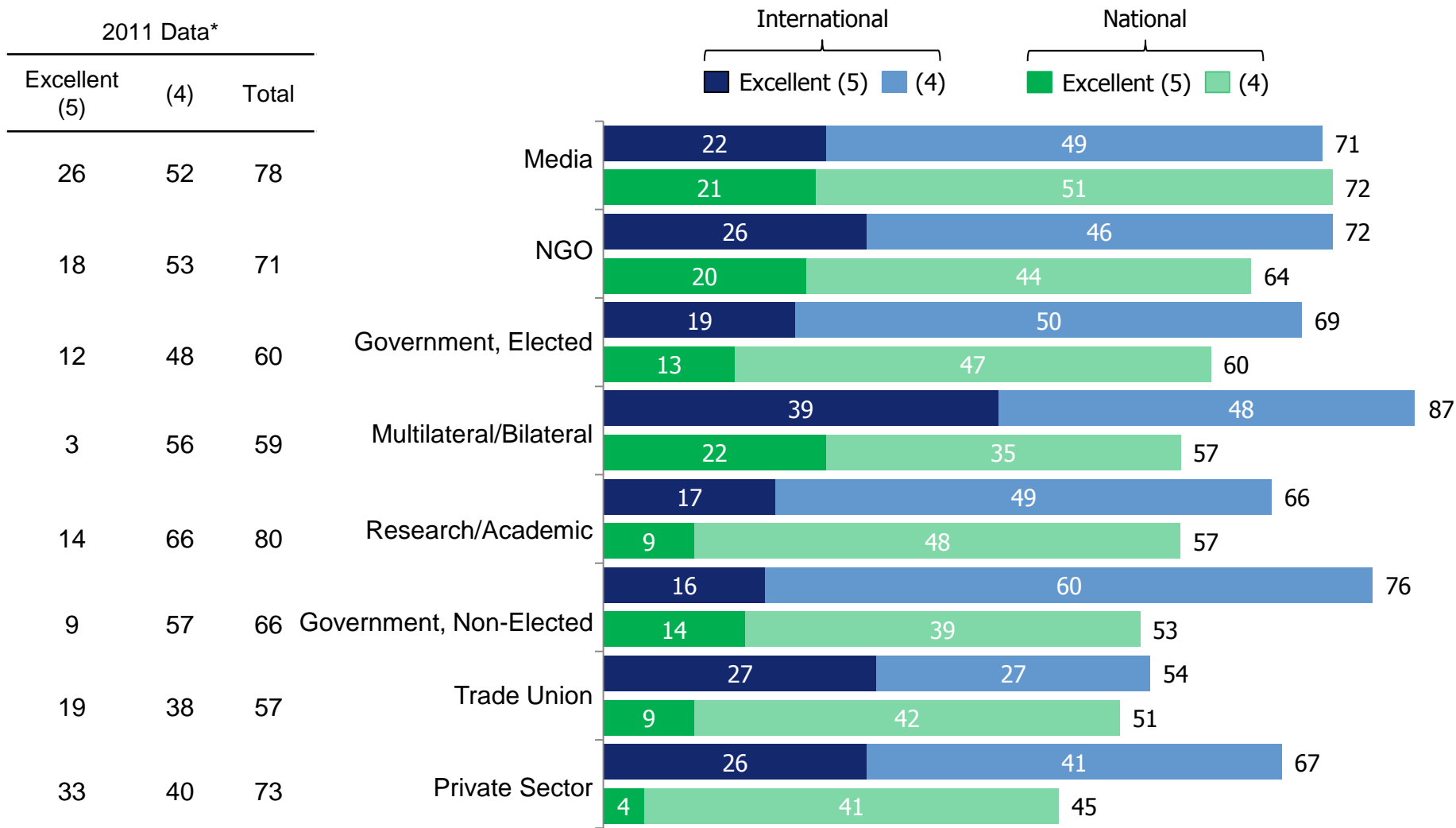
▲ Increase of 10% or more from 2011 to 2013  
▼ Decrease of 10% or less from 2011 to 2013

Subsample: Those who use each type of organization (n=210–262 in 2011, n=205–276 in 2013)

\* “Independent policy research institute” was included as one response option in 2011, but was segmented further into “National” and “International” options in the 2013 survey. The 2011 data is therefore repeated across the National and International samples for general comparability.

# Quality Ratings of Research Provided by Think Tanks IDRC CRDI

By Stakeholder Type, Latin America, 2011–2013



Subsample: Respondents who use Independent policy research institutes

\* “Independent policy research institute” was included as a response option in 2011, but was further segmented into “International” and “National” options on the 2013 survey. For comparison purposes, the 2011 data are shown on the left.

# Quality Ratings of Research Provided by Think Tanks

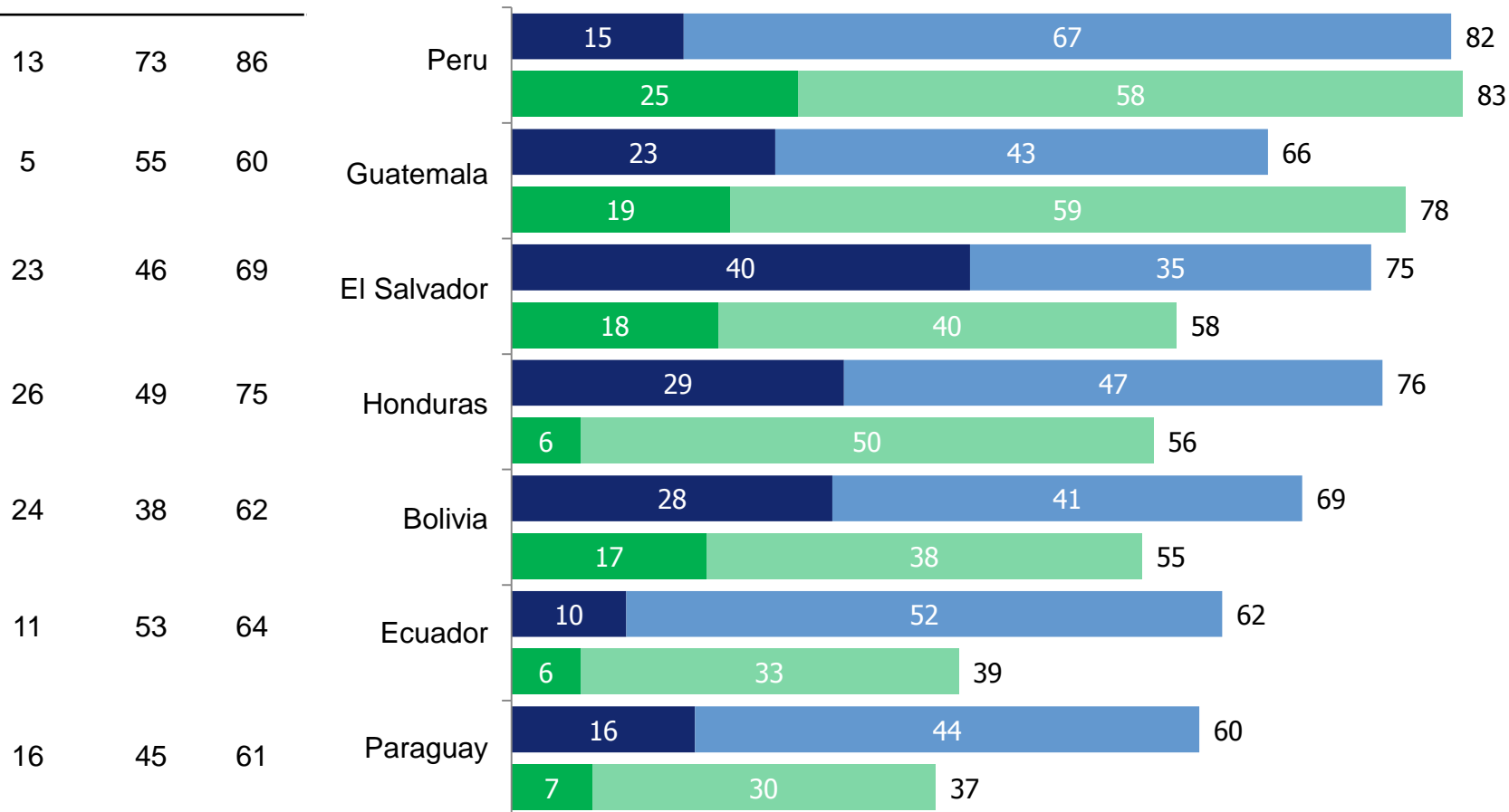
By Country, Latin America, 2011–2013

2011 Data\*

Excellent (5)	(4)	Total
---------------	-----	-------

International  
 ■ Excellent (5) ■ (4)

National  
 ■ Excellent (5) ■ (4)



Subsample: Respondents who use Independent policy research institutes

\* “Independent policy research institute” was included as response options in 2011, but was further segmented into “International” and “National” options on the 2013 survey. For comparison purposes, the 2011 data are shown on the left.

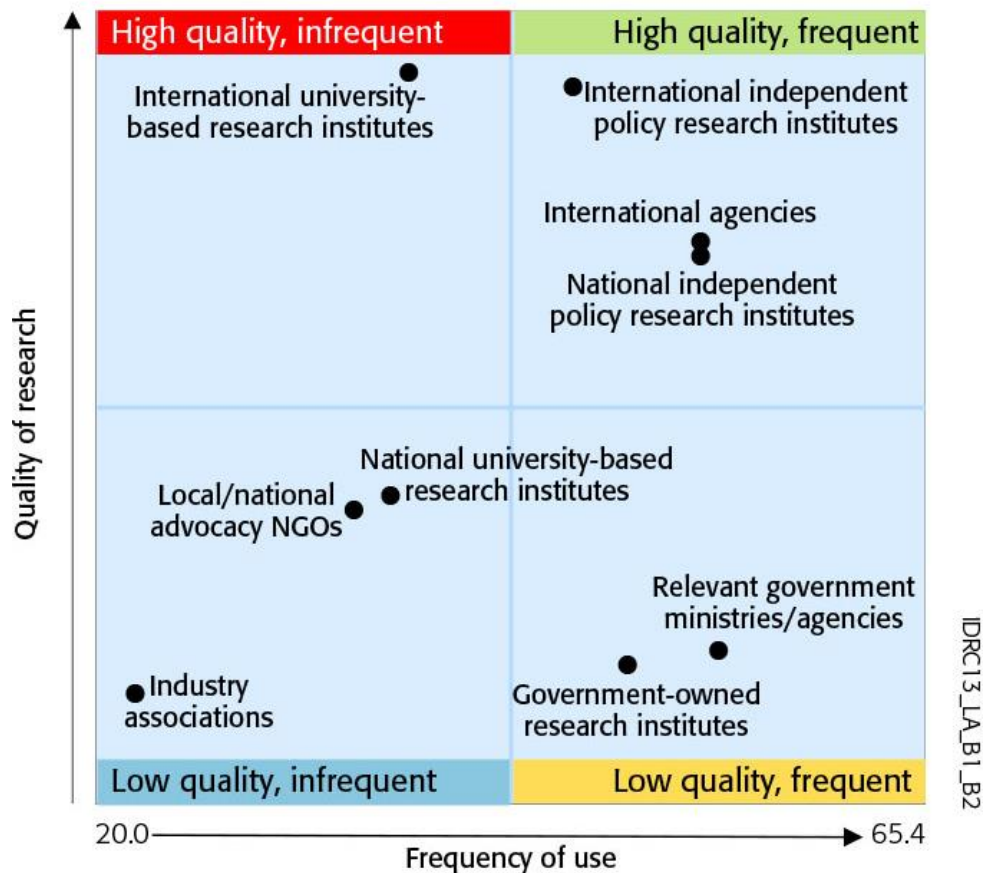
**Think tanks are in an ideal position, as they are seen to deliver high quality research and are frequently used. However, in a pattern similar to 2011, quality does not seem to be the only driver of use: both high quality and low quality sources of information are used frequently by respondents.**

## **SLIDE 53 – by type of organization**

- Think tanks (both national and international) and international agencies are among the most used by respondents, and their quality is perceived to be high.
- However, quality appears to not be the only driving force behind use: although relevant government ministries/agencies and government-owned research institutes have some of the lowest research quality ratings, they are still among the most frequently used by the survey sample. Accessibility or a national focus may be factors here.
- While the quality of international university-based research institutes is thought to be high, these are used less frequently than the primary sources just mentioned.
- NGOs, national university-based research institutes, and industry associations are used less and their quality is perceived as lower than that of other organizations.
- Both international and national think tanks are well recognized for high quality research by strong majorities of surveyed stakeholders in all participating countries.

# Quality of Research vs Frequency of Use

Percent of Respondents Selecting “Excellent” (4+5) vs “Primary Source” (4+5), Latin America, 2013



Think tanks, both national and international, are perceived as having high quality research and they are frequently used. Government organizations are seen as having low quality yet they are frequently used as well.

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## **Familiarity and Level of Interaction with Think Tanks**

**Familiarity with think tanks has improved since 2011 in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Bolivia while declining in Paraguay and Ecuador. Word-of-mouth and media exposure help to bolster familiarity.**

## **SLIDE 56 – Familiarity, by country**

- In Guatemala, El Salvador, and Bolivia there has been a substantial increase since 2011 in familiarity with the think tanks rated. There has been a slight increase in Honduras since 2011. Note that in Bolivia, however, familiarity remains rather low (only one-third express familiarity with think tanks).
- In Paraguay and Ecuador, we see notable declines in think tank familiarity and familiarity remains relatively low. Think tank familiarity in Peru remains similar to that of 2011.

## **SLIDE 57 – Length of engagement, by country**

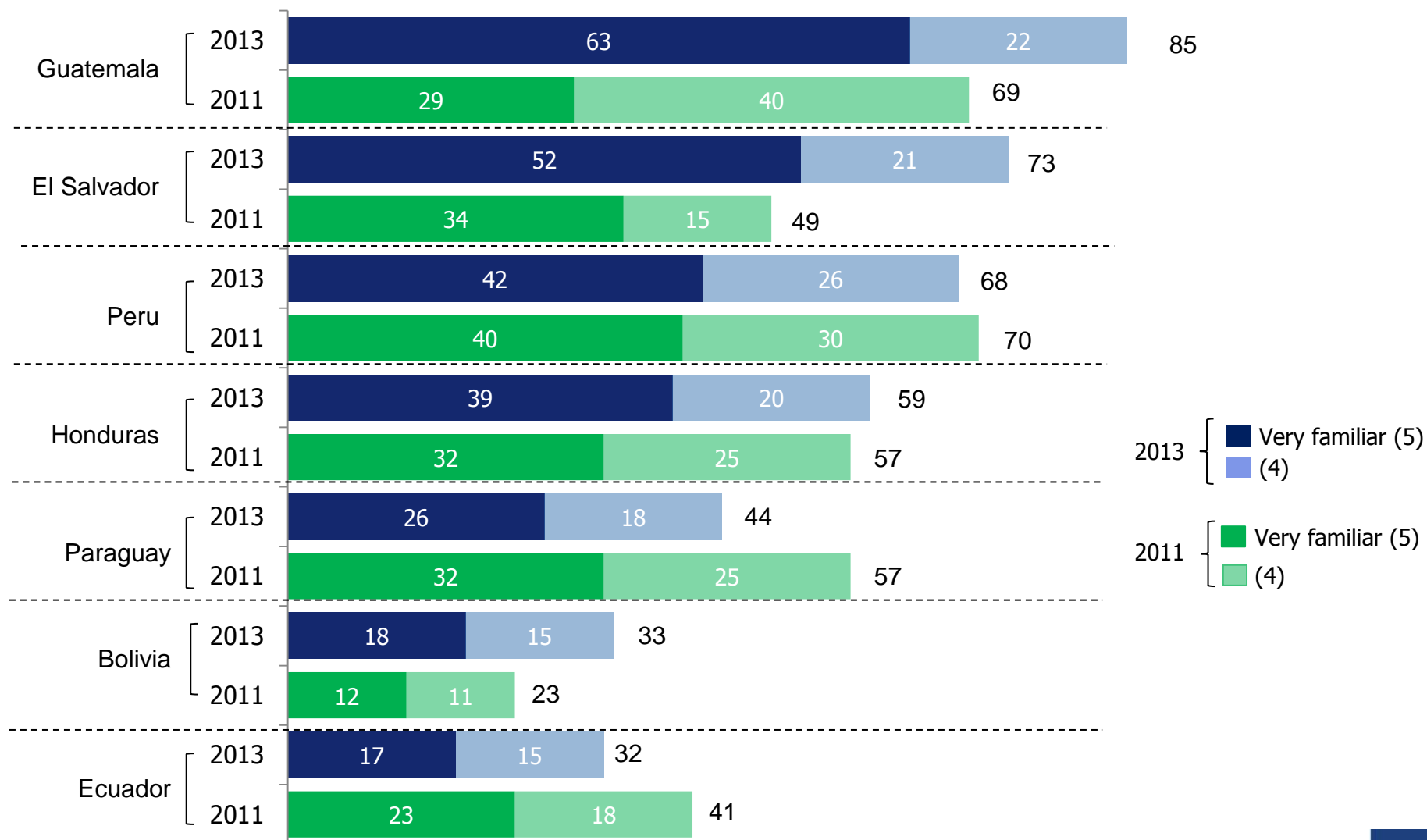
- The majority of respondents in Bolivia and Ecuador have only recently become familiar with think tanks in the past 5 years. The majority of respondents in Guatemala, El Salvador and Peru have been familiar with the think tanks for more than 10 years. For Paraguay and Honduras, most of the respondents have been familiar with the think tanks for one to 10 years.

## **SLIDE 58 – Interaction, by Latin America total**

- Respondents indicate that familiarity with a think tank is bolstered primarily by hearing about the think tank from a trusted colleague or by encountering its work in the media. At least half of respondents also receive its publications, communicate with think tank staff, use its website, and attended events the think tank has organized over the past year. While some do refer to annual reports issued by think tanks, almost half of respondents have never read one.

# Familiarity with Prompted Think Tanks

Average of All Think Tanks Rated Within a Country,  
by Country, Latin America, 2011–2013





# Number of Years Familiar with Think Tank's Work

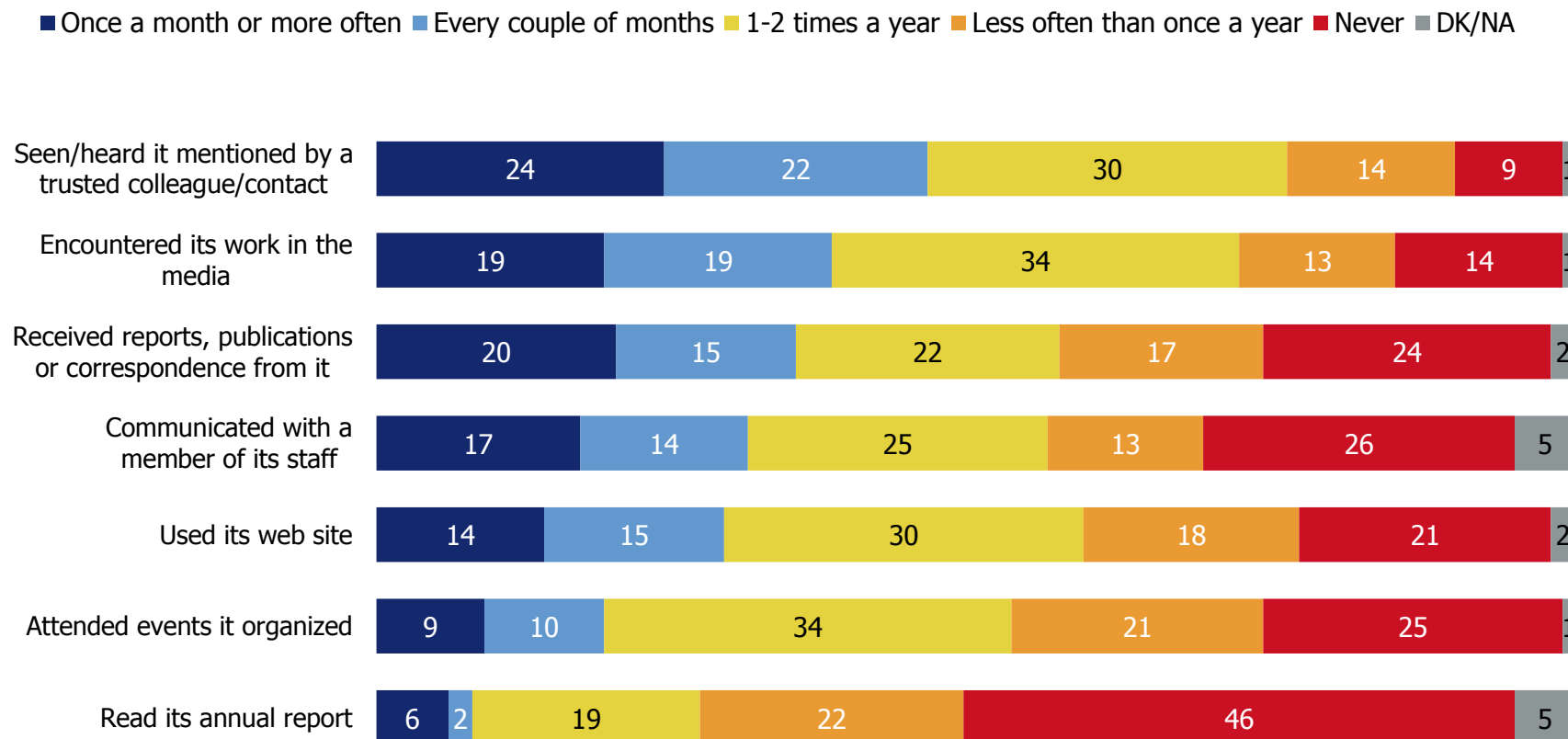
By Country, Latin America, 2013

	<b>Bolivia</b>	<b>Ecuador</b>	<b>El Salvador</b>	<b>Guatemala</b>	<b>Honduras</b>	<b>Paraguay</b>	<b>Peru</b>
Less than one year	15	14	5	0	6	8	5
1 to less than 5 years	68	54	22	12	37	39	13
5 to less than 10 years	10	23	21	20	31	21	22
10 to less than 20 years	0	5	36	51	23	23	39
20 years or more	0	2	16	17	3	2	21

Subsample: Those who are familiar with a think tank  
Table does not include those saying "don't know"

# Frequency of Interaction with Think Tank via Various Channels

Average Responses Across All Rated Think Tanks, Latin America,  
2013



**IDRC**

International Development  
Research Centre



**CRDI**

Centre de recherches pour le  
développement international

# Think Tank Performance Ratings

**Think tanks are seen as knowledgeable providers of high quality research, however, many feel their partnerships with public policy actors could be improved.**

(Note: Respondents were asked to rate up to two think tanks in their country that they were familiar with on a range of performance attributes. These responses are specifically about think tanks in their country.)

## **Strengths**

- Across all countries, respondents believe think tanks in their country provide a rich program of high quality research and maintain quality research staff. They are also perceived as having good regional knowledge and being knowledgeable about the process of policy development. These strengths were also identified in 2011.

## **Areas to Improve**

- Effective engagement with policy makers and effective partnering with policy actors outside of government are two areas that require attention. Other areas that were given lower ratings are having adequate infrastructure to function effectively and having an innovative approach to research.
- Innovation and partnership issues were raised in 2011 as well.

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# Ways to Improve Think Tanks in Latin America

**A focus on research quality and presenting research findings in a more audience-friendly manner continue to be key ways to improve the perceptions of think tanks and their outputs.**

## **SLIDE 67 – by Latin America total**

- When asked which of a list of factors is most important for improving think tank performance in their country, 87% point to improving the quality of the research and 81% see value in a more audience-friendly presentation of research findings.
- Three-quarters of respondents believe that increasing the availability of trained/experience research staff is important, while 70% point to having diversified sources of funding
- Views have generally remained unchanged since 2011.

## **SLIDE 68 - by stakeholder type**

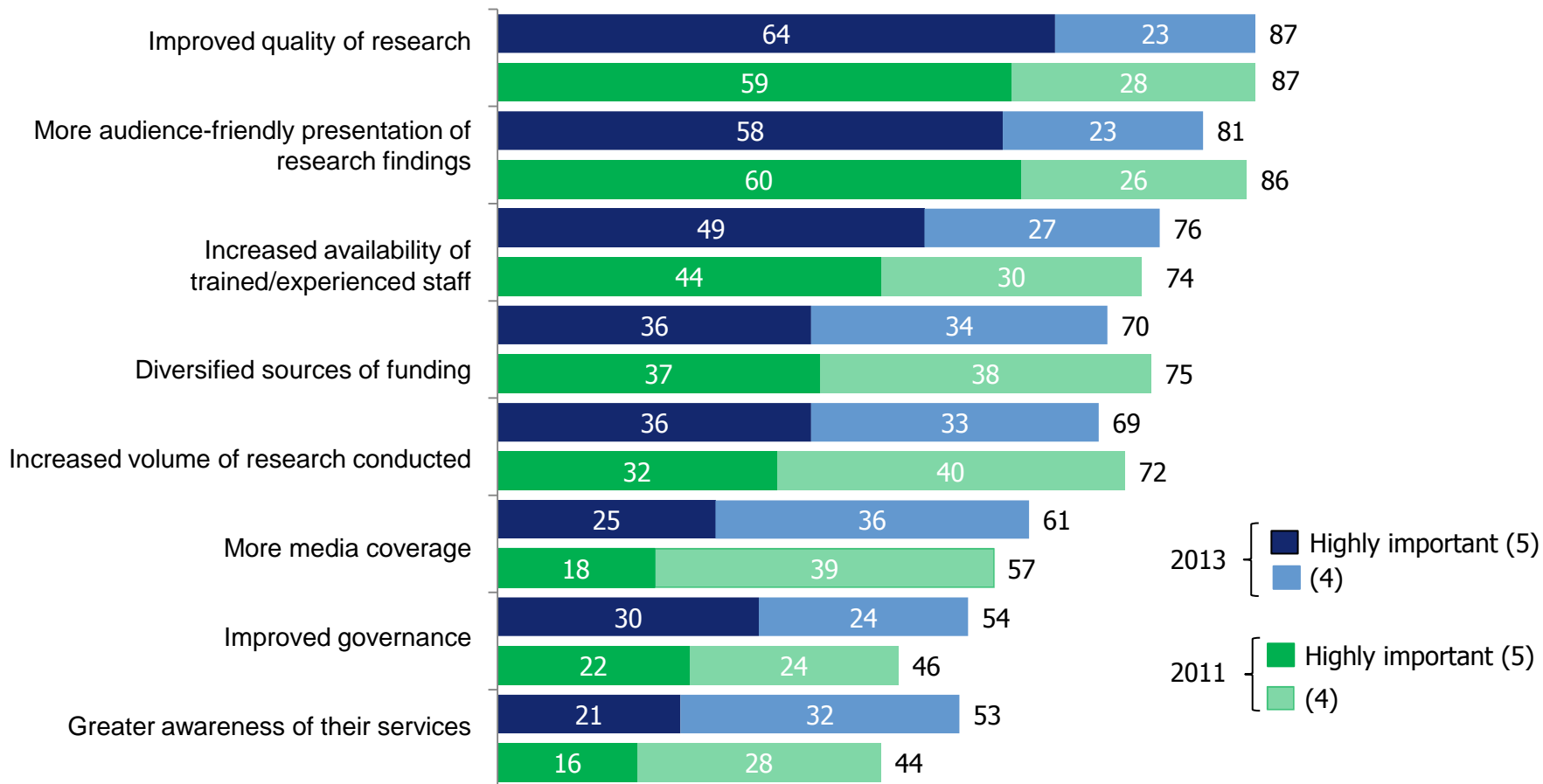
- Surveyed elected and non-elected government officials, media, and private sector respondents agree that improving the quality of research and having more audience-friendly presentations are the most important factors to improve think tank performance. Multilateral/bilateral, NGO, research/academia, and trade union respondents place high value on increasing the availability of research staff as well.

## **SLIDE 69 - by country**

- As is the case with the different stakeholder audiences, improving the research quality and having more audience-friendly presentations are considered across most Latin American markets to be the key factors to improving think tank performance.

# Importance of Factors for Improving Performance of Think Tanks in Respondent's Country

Percent of Respondents Selecting "Important" (4+5),  
Latin America, 2011–2013



# Importance of Factors for Improving Performance of Think Tanks in Respondent's Country

Percent of Respondents Selecting “Important” (4+5),  
by Stakeholder Type, Latin America, 2011–2013

	Overall average 2013	Elected government	Non-elected government	Media	Multilateral/ bilateral	NGO	Private sector	Research/ academia	Trade Union
Improved quality of research	87	90	91	84	78	87	91 ▲	88	82
More audience-friendly presentation of research findings	81	85 ▲	81	86	84 ▼	75 ▼	88	71 ▼	87
Increased availability of trained/experienced staff	76	68	72	65 ▼	82	79	77 ▲	81	85 ▲
Diversified sources of funding	70	58 ▼	69	64	62 ▼	72 ▼	76	75	77 ▲
Increased volume of research conducted	69	65	65 ▼	72 ▲	69 ▲	59 ▼	80	72	68
More media coverage	61	69	61 ▲	76	36	61	57	54	76 ▲
Improved governance	54	38 ▼	53 ▲	56	42 ▲	60	66 ▲	43	77 ▲
Greater awareness of their services	53	60	43	67 ▲	37 ▲	54 ▲	39	51 ▲	80 ▲

Most important factor  
 Second most important factor



▲ Increase of 10% or more from 2011 to 2013  
▼ Decrease of 10% or less from 2011 to 2013



# Importance of Factors for Improving Performance of Think Tanks in Respondent's Country

Percent of Respondents Selecting “Important” (4+5),  
by Country, Latin America, 2011–2013

	Overall average 2013		Bolivia		Ecuador		El Salvador		Guatemala		Honduras		Paraguay		Peru	
Improved quality of research	87		91		77		93		90	▲	91		81		88	
More audience-friendly presentation of research findings	81		83		72	▼	74	▼	73		90		85		89	
Increased availability of trained/experienced staff	76		83	▲	66		72		76		73	▼	81		82	▲
Diversified sources of funding	70		78	▲	60	▼	69	▼	73		66	▼	64		80	
Increased volume of research conducted	69		68		65	▼	57	▼	58		78		70		85	▲
More media coverage	61		63		54	▼	48		51	▼	76	▲	77	▲	60	
Improved governance	54		47		44	▲	50		61		63		54		60	▲
Greater awareness of their services	53		56		53		36		51	▲	49		71	▲	58	▲

 Most important factor  
 Second most important factor

▲ Increase of 10% or more from 2011 to 2013  
 ▼ Decrease of 10% or less from 2011 to 2013

# Advice for Think Tanks to Better Assist Respondents in Their Work

Respondents were asked what advice they might have for independent policy research institutes in their country, so that they might better assist them in their work. Responses were quite similar across stakeholder audiences and across the 7 participating Latin American countries, broadly centering around the following key suggestions:

- Stakeholders call for think tanks to **increase communication of their research** and to make sure findings are accessible to all and easy to understand. Some stakeholders recommend think tanks connect more with other institutions, e.g., academic and government, to make sure their research can reach and benefit society at large.
- Respondents want think tanks to **conduct relevant research** that is aligned with the needs of the country and that contains recommendations that policy makers can use. Several stakeholders would like to see less market-focus and more coverage of social and other issues.
- Think tanks are urged to **improve the credibility of their research** by improving quality, being more rigorous in terms of ensuring objectivity, and making sure they are transparent about sources and open to scrutiny and debate. Some respondents would also like to see research become more neutral and politically independent.

# Advice for Think Tanks to Better Assist Respondents in Their Work

"I would recommend better interaction with the research centers of the public university."

Bolivia, Research/Academia

"Take on a public policy perspective with a social interest, further away from a market interest. Be more rigorous and objective when carrying out the analysis."

Paraguay, Research/Academia

"The quality of recommendations and more realistic proposals for the needs and problems facing the country. More scientific and academic rigor that is not influenced by ideological and political factors. The assessments should be relevant and focused on reducing concrete problems in the country."

El Salvador, Government

"To communicate their work, with the goal that the public, the press and other specialized institutions will have better access to it."

Paraguay, NGO

"Perhaps to include in their programs a dedicated and better structured stage of communication and dissemination of the research to the media, other researchers, and the general public."

Paraguay, Media

"For all research it is necessary to communicate the results with the same quality but on a level that the social organizations can understand."

Bolivia, NGO

"Personally I think that the two think tanks supported by the IDRC make an important effort in supporting quality research on the design of public policy and I would suggest better collaboration between the two to focus on specific themes."

Bolivia, Research/Academia

"That they find a way to publish the results of the research in the most didactic way possible."

Bolivia, NGO

# Advice for Think Tanks to Better Assist Respondents in Their Work

“The carrying out of research on current problems in the country, with critical analysis based on knowledge of the national reality, with suggestions or alternative solutions.”

Paraguay, Research/Academia

“That they link their research to public policy, as much formulation as research, that they involve the policy makers.”

Peru, NGO

“That the research and studies have high quality, technical support, and above all, that they aim suggestions for solutions or focus on national or sectorial problems. To not get caught up only in theoretical issues but to try to have an impact on generating change and public policy.”

Guatemala, NGO

“More coordination, especially with the National Congress. Better direct participation of the organizations in socializing the laws.”

Honduras, Government

“Decentralization of information for better accessibility; participation of the public in the debates.”

Ecuador, NGO

“To be objective in the results and not just try to justify their own work.”

Ecuador, Private sector

“The issue of not only designing studies, but to find an element of social impact that is interesting and newsworthy, that is marketable, with informative facts that generate informative content that in this way is more widely spread. Often there is a press conference but these press conferences are for information that does not get very much attention, but if there is a fact that is important and revealing, then it becomes more significant and generates content that is informative.”

Honduras, Media

“The recommendations of the studies should be more precise and practical. Who, what, when, how much does it cost. Better dissemination of the research results.”

Peru, Multilateral/Bilateral



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