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Think Tank Initiative Policy Community Survey 2013

Report on South Asia

December 2013

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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 South Asian survey. This region was last surveyed between December 2010 and February 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 and telephone interviews in 5 South Asian countries, from September 19th to November 18th, 2013.
- The participating South Asian countries include Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.
- Respondents were contacted by telephone and given the option to complete the interview over the telephone or online. The survey was offered in English.
- In India, a larger sample of 80 respondents was gathered due to the large number of think tanks (9 in total) evaluated in the survey.

		South Asia				
	Total	Bangladesh	India	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka
Total	242	40	80	41	40	41
Online	65	10	34	6	7	8
Offline	177	30	46	35	33	33

- 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.
- 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	South Asia				
		Bangladesh	India	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka
Total	242	40	80	41	40	41
Government elected	22	5	8	4	2	3
Government non-elected	30	5	8	6	4	7
Media	38	5	13	6	6	8
Multilateral/bilateral	30	3	11	6	6	4
NGO	49	9	17	9	8	6
Private sector	29	6	8	4	6	5
Research/academia	44	7	15	6	8	8

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.

	Total	South Asia				
		Bangladesh	India	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka
Total	2365	341	915	295	461	353
GlobeScan	1380	207	307	242	367	257
IDRC & TTI grantee organizations	985	134	608	53	94	96

- **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 South Asian 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

As in 2011, stakeholders mostly require information on poverty alleviation and economic, fiscal and monetary issues to help with their involvement in the national policy making process. Gender issues now ranks third, as interest in a number of other areas has dropped off somewhat since two years ago.

- Strong majorities of respondents across all stakeholder groups and countries are looking for information on poverty alleviation, as well as on economic, fiscal and monetary issues, to help with their involvement in the national policy making process. These were the top themes in 2011 as well.
- Gender issues now ranks in third place, moving ahead of topics such as education, environment, agriculture/food security, and healthcare, where there has been a slight decline in interest. Foreign affairs information continues to receive the least amount of interest.
- The level of interest in particular topics varies slightly by stakeholder audience. Media respondents once again report above average interest in nearly all information topics, likely reflecting the broad scope of their reporting needs. Elected government stakeholders surveyed have the most wide ranging information interests, probably requiring information on many topics for their work in national policy. NGOs are far more focused in their areas of interest, with human rights, poverty alleviation, and gender issues standing out.
- Information priorities are quite similar from one country to the next, although respondents in Nepal stand out for their high interest in natural resources information, while Pakistan is highly focused on education. There has been a slight decline in interest across a number of information topics in Bangladesh and Nepal.

Information Access

Thankfully for respondents, the information that they are more likely to require for their work in national policy tends to be the information that they feel is more easily obtained. The perceived ease of obtaining information also appears to have improved since 2011.

- Obtaining information about trade or industry, economic or fiscal issues, education, poverty alleviation, and gender issues is the easiest, while obtaining information about human rights, foreign affairs, and the environment is the most difficult, according to those surveyed.
- The ease of obtaining information has improved for most topics since 2011, although information on the environment – one of the key topic areas of interest – is less accessible than respondents would like. Information on human rights and foreign affairs in particular is cited as being less difficult to obtain than before.
- At a stakeholder level, the private sector respondents appear to have the most trouble accessing various types of information.
- At a country level, it appears the availability of information for policy development differs quite substantially from one nation to the next, with no clear trending across the region.

Information Sources and Distribution Methods

Policy briefs are used by over eight in ten respondents to inform their understanding of national policy development, although this is only one of a variety of information sources used by stakeholders surveyed (publications and reports continue to be consulted most widely). Websites are seen as the best way to share information relating to national policy development.

- Policy briefs (defined as short, targeted analysis of policy) are used by over eight in ten respondents to inform their understanding of national policy development, suggesting readership of these documents is good.
- Publications and reports are the predominant source of information used to increase respondent understanding of national policy development. This is true for all countries and nearly all stakeholder audiences. This is followed by policy briefs, data banks/databases, conferences or events, expert consultations, discussions with colleagues, and news information – all of which are referenced to the same degree. Generally, stakeholders appear to be scanning a variety of information sources to inform their understanding.
- Among those surveyed, policy briefs are used most often by non-elected government and NGOs, followed by multilaterals and elected government. The private sector and academics/researchers are somewhat less inclined than others to say they use policy briefs to inform their understanding (although this is still over 70%). Policy brief use is strong in all countries surveyed.
- Across all South Asian countries and audiences, websites are seen as, by far, the best way to share information relating to national policy development. Print and email rank second and third, respectively. Radio and blogging have almost no traction (Nepal is an exception with one quarter turning to radio).

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

Both national and international think tanks have a strong profile in South Asia; national think tanks in particular continue to be perceived as the primary source of research-based evidence by surveyed stakeholders.

- As in 2011, over six in ten respondents – more so than for any other source tested – turn to national think tanks when they require research-based evidence related to social and economic policies. This is closely followed by relevant government ministries and agencies, and international agencies (mentions of the latter are up significantly from 2011, as are mentions of government-owned research institutes). International think tanks rank fifth overall, used by over half of respondents (51%).
- Sources that are used less frequently include university-based research institutes and industry associations.
- National think tanks are the primary source of information for surveyed respondents from academia/research (80%), NGOs (71%) and media (68%). Elected government turn to government ministries first, followed by national think tanks. For the private sector and multilaterals, use of think tanks has declined slightly, now ranking behind international agencies. International think tanks are an important source of information for majorities among research/academia, multilaterals, and NGOs surveyed, but are used less frequently by others.
- At the country level, respondents in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are strong users of national think tanks – more so than the regional average. Respondents in Pakistan point to international think tanks as their primary resource, along with international agencies. As was the case in 2011, those surveyed in India and Nepal say they rely first on government ministries, followed by national think tanks.
- Familiarity with think tanks has improved since 2011 amongst respondents in Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Nepal. It remains steady in India and has declined slightly in Bangladesh. Word-of-mouth and media exposure are most effective in bolstering think tank familiarity.

Quality of Information

Stakeholders look for high quality research that is relevant to their needs – qualities which they feel are found in the work produced by national and international think tanks.

- 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 and national think tanks receive the highest ratings for quality compared to all other sources. This is followed by international university-based research institutes and international agencies. Ratings are generally up from 2011 for these organizations. Local organizations (other than national think tanks) do not rate as highly when it comes to perceived research quality.
- Government-owned research institutes, government ministries, and local/national NGOs are chosen far more for the relevance of their research needs than quality of output. Government ministries and industry associations are also sometimes the only organizations deemed available to respondents.
- Respondents who see think tanks as providing high quality research are more likely to use them as a source of information. 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 need for information with a particularly national focus may be factors here.
- At a stakeholder audience level, international think tanks receive first place ranking for quality by surveyed multilaterals. They place second for quality by all other surveyed groups except elected government. Surveyed media and NGOs give their top ranking for quality to national think tanks, which are also highly rated by elected government respondents. Respondents from government (elected and non-elected), private sector and research/academia give their top ratings to international university-based research institutes, with think tanks close behind.
- At a country level, the perceived quality ratings of national think tanks are highest among respondents in Bangladesh and India. They also rate highly among respondents in Sri Lanka, although behind international agencies. International think tanks receive second place ratings for quality in all countries except Sri Lanka, where they rank fourth. In Nepal and Pakistan, respondents give their top ratings for quality to international university-based research institutes, with international think tanks close behind. Think tank quality ratings have improved in all countries since 2011.

Strengths and Areas for Improvement

Similar to 2011, think tanks are highly regarded for their quality research and staff and knowledge of policy process and issues, however, many feel that more attention could be paid to information dissemination and the formation of effective partnerships.

- Across all countries, respondents believe think tanks provide a rich program of high quality research, and importantly, are knowledgeable about the process of policy development. Think tanks are also perceived to maintain quality research staff with good regional knowledge, as well as a focus on high priority issues within the respective countries.
- However, information provision is clearly an area requiring attention: some feel think tanks could improve upon their transparency and openness, and in the dissemination of their research and recommendations. The performance ratings for “value of in-person events” is also relatively lower in many countries, and many believe think tanks could be more effective at partnering with public policy actors and engaging with policy makers.
- Lessons learned from highly rated think tanks, such as those in Nepal and Sri Lanka, could be adapted and applied by others to help improve the perceived quality of research and innovative approach to research, among others. The perceived performance of think tanks in Nepal and Sri Lanka is relatively good among surveyed stakeholders in those countries, across most measures of think tank performance. Indian respondents do not rate their think tanks as highly as do stakeholders in other countries.

Advice for Think Tanks

Stakeholder advice for think tanks is similar across stakeholder audiences and countries, and centres on three themes: better communication of research results, being non-political and conducting objective research in a transparent manner, and taking steps to ensure that research is relevant and timely and will lead to action around policy decisions. A need for more focus on the marginalized was also raised.

- Most stakeholders believe that a continued focus on quality – both in terms of research and staff – is key to improving the perceptions of think tanks and their outputs. Government respondents place a high value on improved governance as well. Private sector respondents have a slightly different view, saying that improved perceptions will come as a result of having a more audience-friendly presentation.
- Think tanks are urged to better communicate the results of their research: to disseminate it to a wider audience by improving ease of access and communicating more effectively with media, and to make reports and presentations more easily understandable (with less jargon).
- Stakeholders surveyed want think tanks to conduct relevant, timely research that will lead to action, such as helping with the development of policy or decision-making. They would also like to see think tanks collect more relevant primary data on marginalized groups. Some express concern that respondent banks used by stakeholders are too limited and that the views of a wider audience need to be captured.
- Respondents feel strongly that think tanks need to be non-political, collaborating with community groups and other stakeholders, while still remaining independent.

Summary of Key Findings

	5-country South Asian average	Bangladesh	India	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka
% that use policy briefs	82	80	76	90	78	90
% that use national think tanks as primary source of info (4+5 out of 5)	66	83	63	56	60	76
% that use international think tanks as primary source of info (4+5 out of 5)	51	58	43	44	68	56
Quality of research provided by national think tanks (% saying excellent: 4+5 out of 5)	68	77	74	51	61	68
Quality of research provided by international think tanks (% saying excellent: 4+5 out of 5)	68	66	69	68	73	64
Familiarity with think tanks (% rating very familiar: 4+5 out of 5 – average across all TTs tested)	64	57	43	64	72	85
Think tank performance on specific measures (see slide notes for measures)	--	Avg	Below avg	Above avg	Avg	Above avg

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Information Required for Policy Making in South Asia: Type, Accessibility, Source

Types of Information Required for Policy Making

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

SLIDE 21 – by South Asia total

- Respondents were asked what information they require in 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 (83%) and on economic, fiscal and monetary issues (78%). Interest in information related to gender issues has risen on the agenda since 2011, now ranking third.
- Education and food security information needs have dropped slightly; likewise healthcare and trade/industry. Foreign affairs continues to rank last.

SLIDE 22 – by stakeholder type

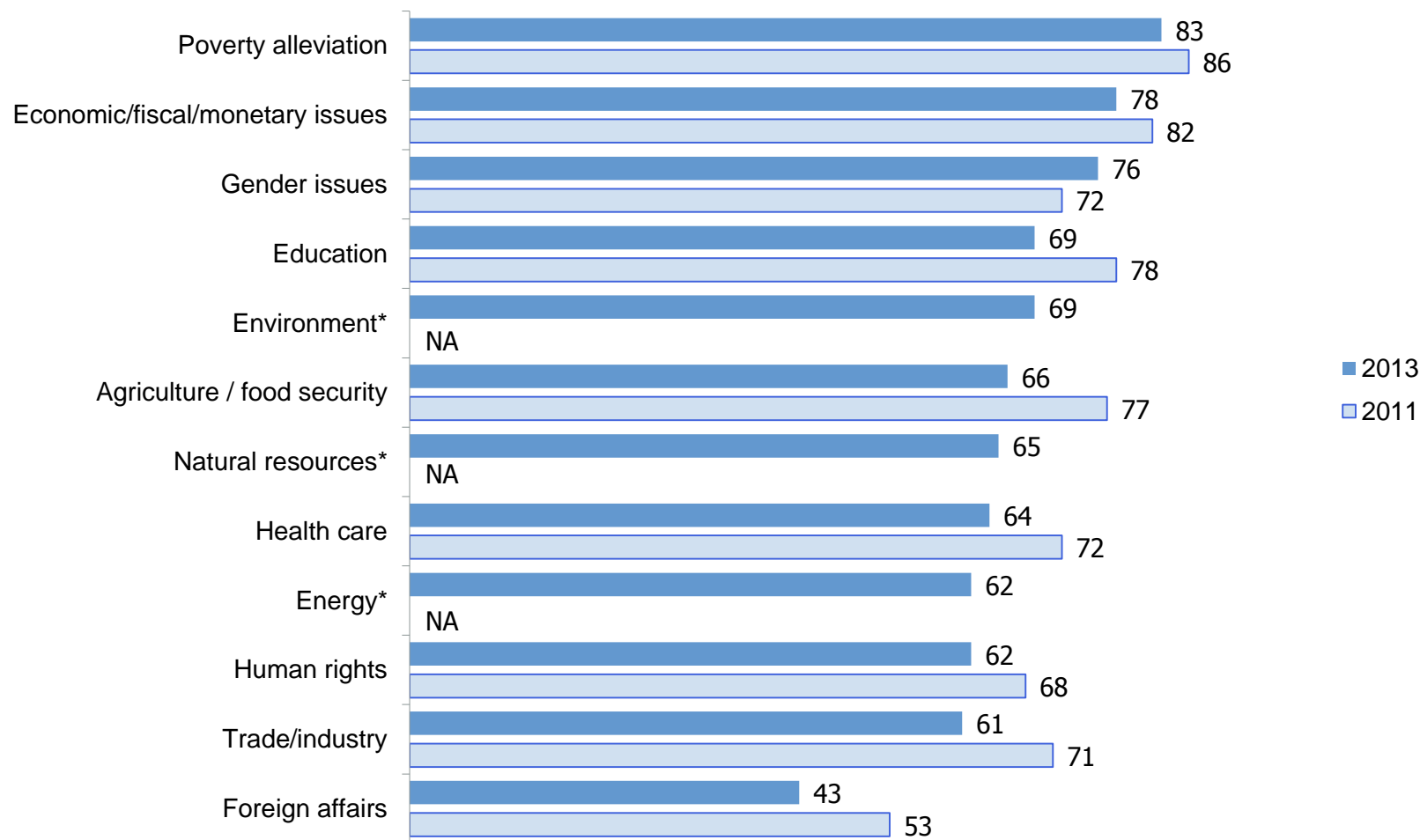
- All stakeholder groups, with the exception of the media, are most interested in information about poverty alleviation and economic and fiscal issues. NGOs are also highly interested in human rights information.
- The media are most likely to seek trade and industry information, along with information related to energy, education, and economic and fiscal issues.
- Gender issues rank second in terms of interest for non-elected government, NGOs, and academia.
- The consensus in topic interests across the majority of stakeholder groups suggests that in situations of comprehensive cross-sector policy development, poverty alleviation and economic information is most required.

SLIDE 23 – by country

- For respondents in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and India, information about poverty alleviation tops the list of information most requested. Respondents in Nepal focus on natural resources and gender issues, while in Pakistan, economic and fiscal issues ranks first among respondents, followed by education. There has been a slight decline in interest across a number of information topics in Bangladesh and Nepal.

Types of Information Required for Policy Making

Prompted, South Asia, 2011–2013







* “Environment”, “natural resources”, and “energy” were combined in one response option in 2011 (selected by 80% of respondents), but were segmented in 2013.

Types of Information Required for Policy Making

Prompted, by Stakeholder Type, South Asia, 2011–2013

	Overall average 2013		Elected government		Non-elected government		Media		Multilateral/ bilateral		NGO		Private sector		Research/ academia
Poverty alleviation	83		86		87		76		83		92		93		70 ▼
Economic/fiscal issues	78		82		77		87		80		73		90		64 ▼
Gender issues	76		77 ▲		77 ▲		82		77		90		59		66
Education	69		64 ▼		70		87		60 ▼		71 ▼		62		64 ▼
Environment*	69		64		70		79		80		73		79		43
Agriculture / food security	66 ▼		68 ▼		57 ▼		76 ▼		63		73 ▼		59		61 ▼
Natural resources*	65		68		63		84		57		67		69		48
Health care	64		68		70		74		53		67 ▼		72		45 ▼
Energy*	62		68		57		87		53		57		79		39
Human rights	62		68		57		76		47 ▼		92		55 ▼		34 ▼
Trade/industry	61 ▼		64		73		89 ▲		60 ▲		37 ▼		69 ▼		48 ▼
Foreign affairs	43 ▼		55		40		68 ▼		43 ▲		33 ▼		41 ▼		30 ▼



 Top mention
 Second mention

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

Types of Information Required for Policy Making

Prompted, by Country, South Asia, 2011–2013

	Overall average 2013	Bangladesh	India	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka
Poverty alleviation	83	88	84	80 ▼	75	90
Economic/fiscal issues	78	78 ▼	75	66 ▼	85	88
Gender issues	76	80	68	83	80	78 ▲
Education	69	75 ▼	61	68 ▼	83	66 ▼
Environment*	69	75	61	76	70	71
Agriculture / food security	66 ▼	60 ▼	68	63 ▼	70	68
Natural resources*	65	58	65	85	53	63
Health care	64	65 ▼	59	66 ▼	68	66
Energy*	62	68	60	66	60	56
Human rights	62	78	55	66	75	46 ▼
Trade/industry	61 ▼	65 ▼	54	44 ▼	73	76
Foreign affairs	43 ▼	60	36	34 ▼	48 ▼	44

 Top mention
 Second mention

▲ Increase of 10% or more from 2011 to 2013

▼ Decrease of 10% or less from 2011 to 2013

The perceived ease of obtaining information varies by topic and appears to have improved since 2011.

SLIDE 25 – by South Asia total

- Thinking of the information required to support policy development, respondents believe that obtaining information about trade or industry, economic or fiscal issues, education, poverty alleviation, and gender issues is the easiest, while obtaining information about human rights, foreign affairs, and the environment is the most difficult. Relative to 2011, respondents believe that most information has become more readily available, with information related to human rights and foreign affairs less difficult to obtain than before.

SLIDE 26 – by stakeholder type

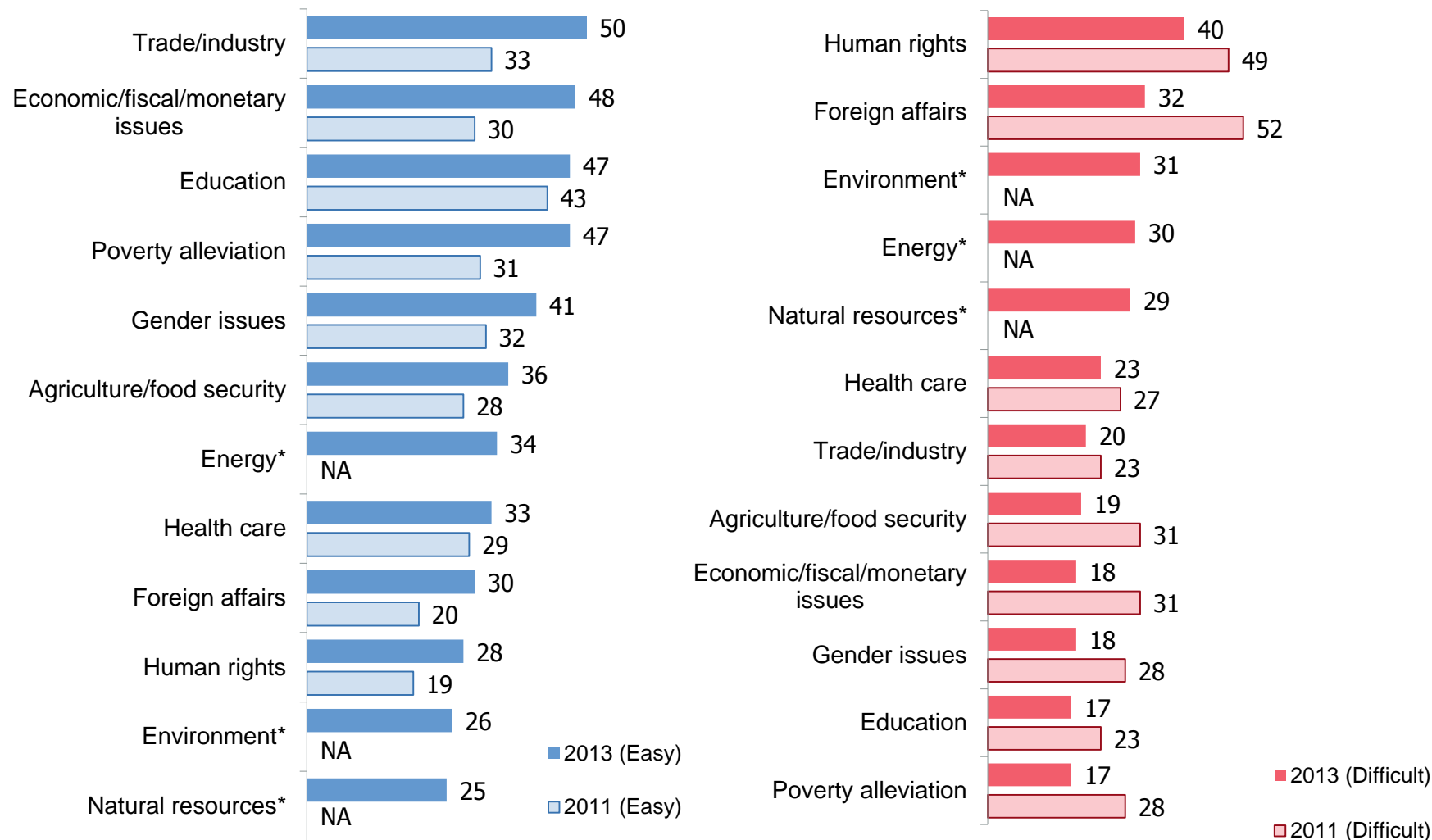
- Media, multilateral organizations and private sector companies surveyed believe obtaining information about trade or industry the easiest, non-elected government and academics believe information about poverty alleviation is the most accessible to support policy development, and elected government and NGOs believe information about education is most accessible.
- Obtaining information about the natural resources is believed to be the most difficult for media, multilaterals and academics. The private sector find it difficult to find information on most topics aside from trade/industry.
- Stakeholders generally report an increase in information accessibility relative to 2011.

SLIDE 27 – by country

- While most respondents report a general increase in the ease with which they can obtain information compared to 2011, respondents in Bangladesh feel ease of access has not changed.
- Stakeholders in India and Sri Lanka perceive information about trade or industry as the easiest to obtain, while Bangladesh and Nepal report information about education as the most accessible. Pakistan respondents point to energy information as most readily available.

Ease of Obtaining Information to Support Policy Development in Following Areas

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



Subsample: Those who say they require information about this particular issue for their work ($n=129-211$ in 2011, $n=104-202$ in 2013)


* “Environment”, “natural resources”, and “energy” were combined in one response option in 2011 (32% selected “easy” (4+5)) and 33% 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, South Asia, 2011–2013

	Overall average 2013	Elected government	Non-elected government	Media	Multilateral/ bilateral	NGO	Private sector	Research/ Academia
Trade/industry	50 ▲	43	36	65 ▲	50	22	65 ▲	52 ▲
Economic/fiscal issues	48 ▲	39 ▲	57	64 ▲	54 ▲	25 ▲	38 ▲	64 ▲
Education	47	50	52	52 ▲	33 ▼	49	39 ▲	46
Poverty alleviation	47 ▲	47	62 ▲	48 ▲	44 ▲	42 ▲	30	58 ▲
Gender issues	41	35	39 ▼	48 ▲	26	48 ▲	35 ▲	41 ▲
Agriculture / food security	36	40	41	28	26	47 ▲	6	52 ▲
Energy*	34	47 ▲	41 ▲	33 ▲	25 ▲	32 ▲	26 ▲	35 ▲
Health care	33	40 ▲	48	39	19 ▼	39 ▲	5 ▼	35 ▲
Foreign affairs	30 ▲	50 ▲	33	35 ▲	31 ▲	19 ▲	17	23
Human rights	28	40 ▲	29 ▼	34	29 ▲	22	31 ▲	20
Environment*	26	21	38	23 ▼	21	33	17	26 ▼
Natural resources*	25	33 ▲	37 ▲	22 ▲	12	27 ▲	25 ▲	19 ▲

 Top mention

 Least mentioned

▲ Increase of 10% or more from 2011 to 2013






























▼ Decrease of 10% or less from 2011 to 2013



Subsample: Those who say they require information about this particular issue for their work ($n=129-211$ in 2011, $n=104-202$ 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, South Asia, 2011–2013

	Overall average 2013		Bangladesh	India	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka	
Trade/industry	50 		42	53 	22	55 	61 	
Economic/fiscal issues	48 		35	58 	30 	53 	53 	
Education	47		57	41 	50	48	41	
Poverty alleviation	47 		54	40 	48 	50 	49 	
Gender issues	41		47	31	41 	44 	47 	
Agriculture / food security	36		33	37 	35 	43 	32	
Energy*	34		15	29	33	58	39	
Health care	33		31	23	33	37	48 	
Foreign affairs	30 		25	41 	14	47 	11 	
Human rights	28		29 	14	44 	33	32 	
Environment*	26		13	27	35	25	31	
Natural resources*	25		9	15	37	29	38	

 Top mention
 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 ($n=129-211$ in 2011, $n=104-202$ in 2013)

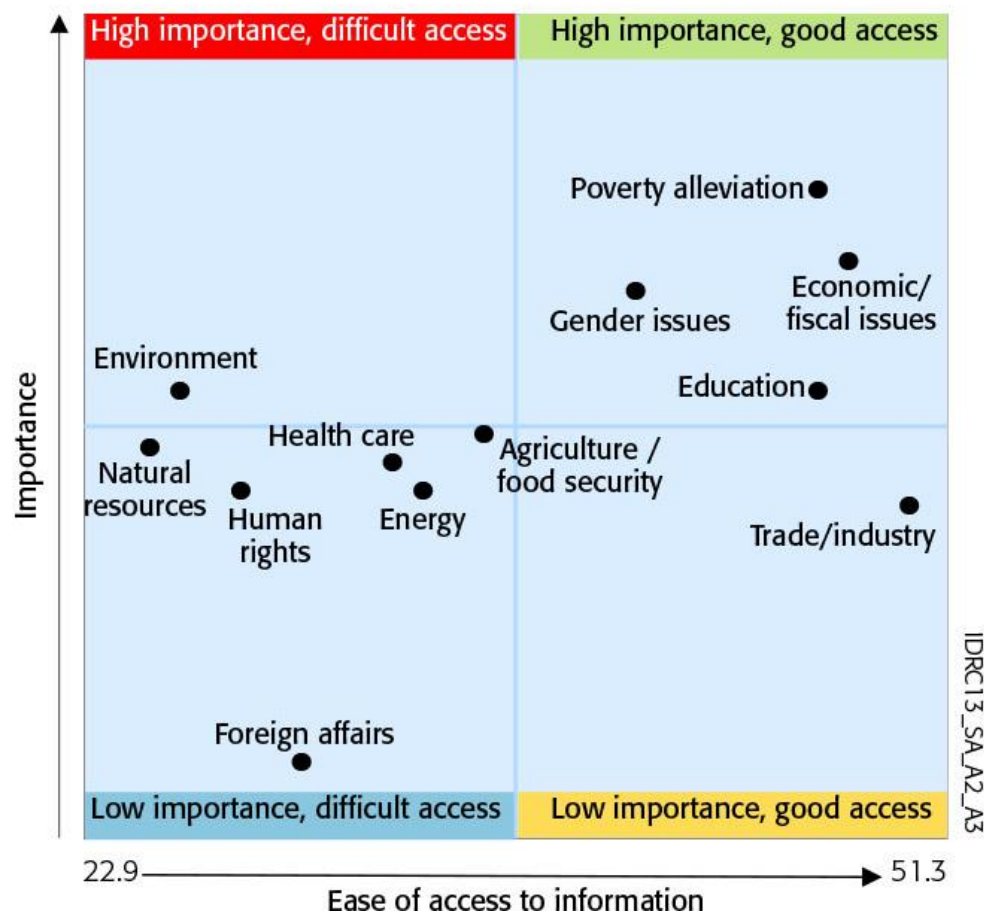
*“Environment”, “natural resources”, and “energy” were combined in one response option in 2011, but were segmented in 2013

Importance vs Ease of Access to Information

Total Mentions vs Respondents Selecting “Easy” (4+5), South Asia, 2013

Thankfully for respondents, the information that they are more likely to require for their work in national policy tends to be the information that is more easily obtained.

The environment is one area where more information is required to meet respondent needs.



IDRC13_SA_A2_A3

Policy briefs are used by over eight in ten respondents to inform their understanding of national policy development – a high number, although similar to many other forms of communication (e.g., conferences, databases, consultation, news). Only publications and reports are consulted substantially more often (95%).

SLIDE 30 – by South Asia total

- Across all stakeholder groups, publications and reports are the predominant source of information used to increase respondent understanding of national policy development.
- Most other resources tested are used by strong majorities of respondents as well (eight in ten), although newsletters/bulletins are used by only seven in ten people.

SLIDE 31 – by stakeholder type

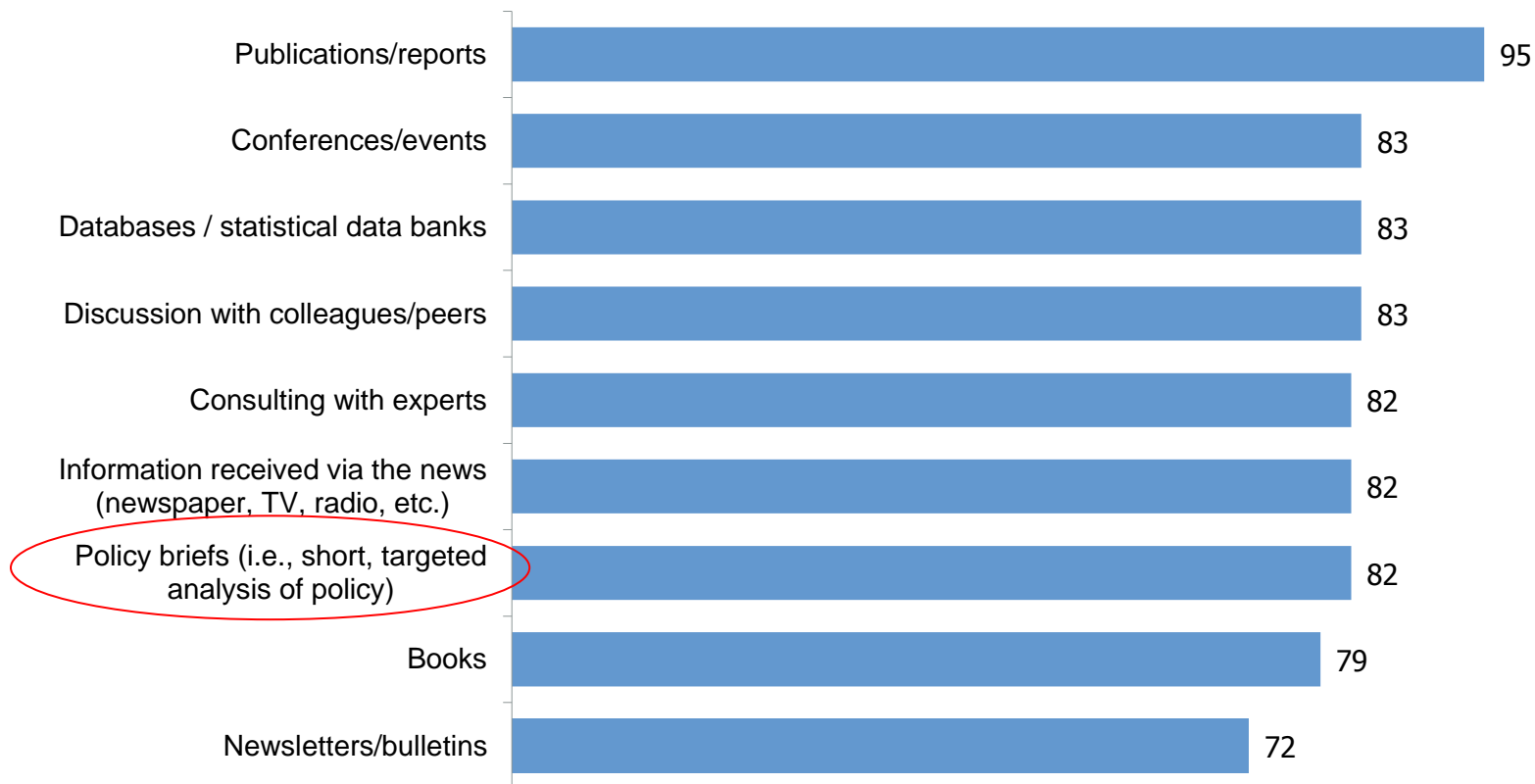
- According to those surveyed, policy briefs are used most often by non-elected government and NGOs, followed by multilaterals and elected government. The private sector and academics/researchers are somewhat less inclined than others to say they use policy briefs to inform their understanding (although this is still over 70%).
- Generally, stakeholders appear to be undertaking a comprehensive scan of a variety of information sources to inform their understanding of policy development.

SLIDE 32 – by country

- Nine in ten respondents in Nepal and Sri Lanka refer to policy briefs, eight in ten in Bangladesh and Pakistan, and three-quarters in India. In all countries, respondents nearly unanimously use publications and reports as their main source for informing their understanding of national policy development.

Information Source Used to Increase Understanding for National Policy Development

Prompted, South Asia, 2013



Information Source Used to Increase Understanding for National Policy Development

Prompted, by Stakeholder Type, South Asia, 2013

	Overall average 2013	Elected government	Non-elected government	Media	Multilateral /bilateral	NGO	Private sector	Research/ academia
Publications/reports	95	95	97	95	100	100	86	91
Conferences/events	83	95	80	82	97	78	86	75
Databases / statistical data banks	83	91	83	76	90	78	83	84
Discussion with colleagues/peers	83	86	90	79	97	84	79	75
Consulting with experts	82	86	93	84	90	80	79	70
Information received via the news (newspaper, TV, radio, etc.)	82	77	67	92	87	88	90	73
Policy briefs (i.e., short, targeted analysis of policy)	82	82	93	79	83	90	72	73
Books	79	91	93	79	70	78	62	84
Newsletters/bulletins	72	91	60	74	87	76	76	55

 Most used

 Least used

Information Source Used to Increase Understanding for National Policy Development

Prompted, by Country, South Asia, 2013

	Overall average 2013	Bangladesh	India	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka
Publications/reports	95	93	93	100	95	98
Conferences/events	83	75	81	83	93	85
Databases / statistical data banks	83	75	84	85	75	93
Discussion with colleagues/peers	83	83	80	83	90	85
Consulting with experts	82	85	76	90	80	85
Information received via the news (newspaper, TV, radio, etc.)	82	85	79	76	93	83
Policy briefs (i.e., short, targeted analysis of policy)	82	80	76	90	78	90
Books	79	88	76	78	78	80
Newsletters/bulletins	72	68	64	83	83	73

 Most used

 Least used

Most Useful Format for Receiving Information for National Policy Development

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

SLIDE 34 – by South Asia total

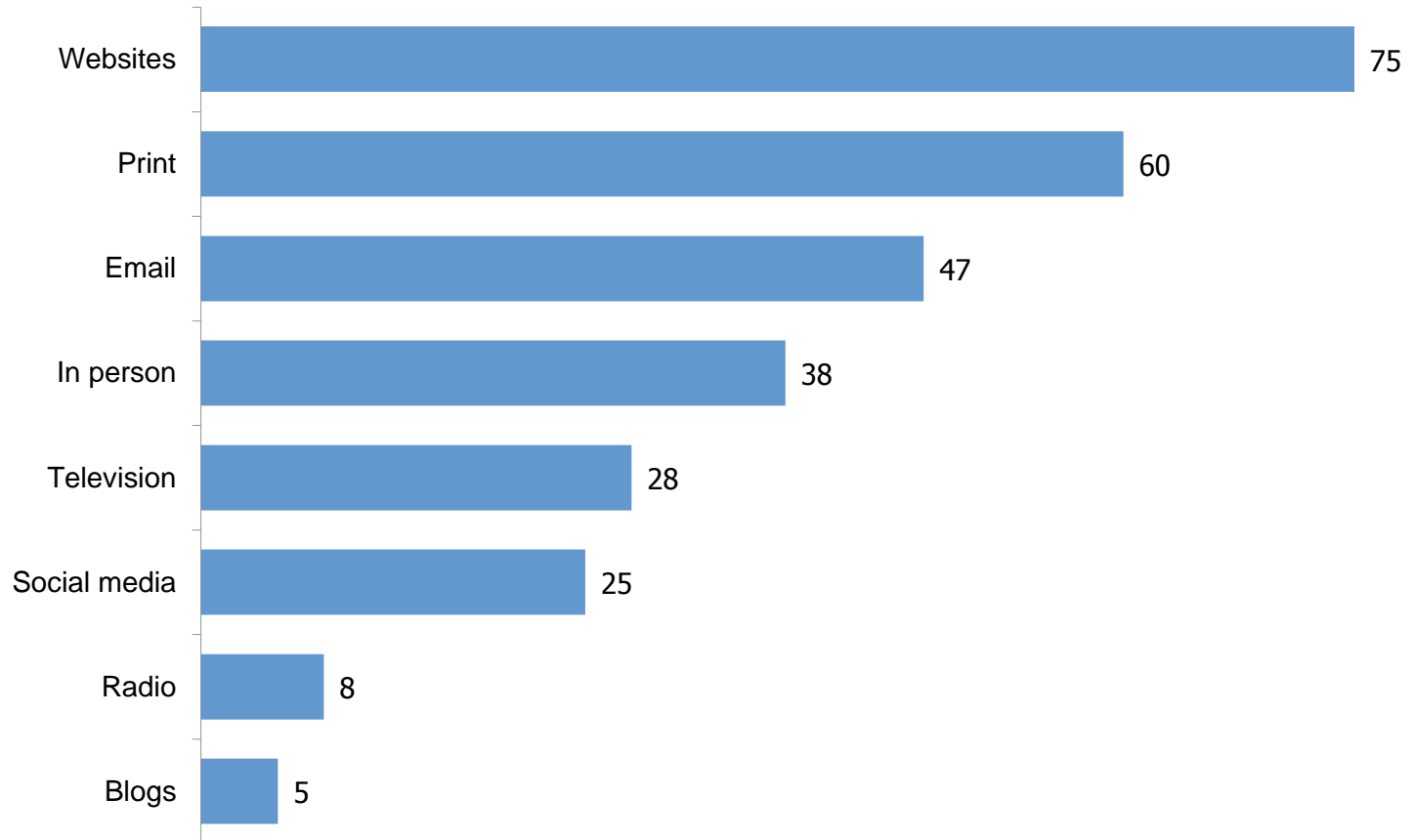
- When asked what format they find most useful for receiving information for national policy development, three-quarters of respondents point to websites, well ahead of any other channel suggested. Print is selected by six in ten respondents, while half see email as most useful. Four in ten would prefer in person, while one-quarter look to television or social media. Only small numbers of people select radio or blogs.

SLIDE 35 and 36 – by stakeholder type and by country

- This point of view does not vary substantially from one stakeholder type to another, other than the fact that academics seem somewhat more likely than others to use email and less likely to turn to social media.
- Country differences are also minimal, with websites seen as most useful across all countries. Respondents in Bangladesh are somewhat more oriented than others to social media. Nepalese respondents use radio more than others. Those in Pakistan use more email and television than others, while respondents in Sri Lanka 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, South Asia, 2013



Most Useful Format for Receiving Information for National Policy Development

Prompted, Could Select Up to Three Responses, by Stakeholder Type, South Asia, 2013



	Overall average 2013	Elected government	Non-elected government	Media	Multilateral/ bilateral	NGO	Private sector	Research/ academia
Websites	75	77	83	61	83	73	69	80
Print	60	59	63	61	67	53	59	61
Email	47	55	50	37	30	45	52	61
In person (face to face or telephone)	38	32	37	45	47	37	31	36
Television	28	23	27	34	33	29	41	14
Social Media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter)	25	27	23	34	20	33	28	9
Radio	8	18	10	16	10	4	0	2
Blogs	5	0	3	5	3	4	10	7

 Most useful
 Least useful

Most Useful Format for Receiving Information for National Policy Development

Prompted, Could Select Up to Three Responses,
by Country, South Asia, 2013

	Overall average 2013	Bangladesh	India	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka
Websites	75	70	74	78	68	85
Print	60	65	63	61	63	46
Email	47	50	41	37	63	51
In person (face to face or telephone)	38	30	40	34	38	46
Television	28	28	23	29	38	29
Social Media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter)	25	35	20	29	25	20
Radio	8	5	3	24	3	10
Blogs	5	3	10	2	3	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

Think tanks – national ones in particular – have a strong profile in South Asia; they continue to be perceived as the primary source of research-based evidence by surveyed stakeholders

SLIDE 39 – By South Asia total

- As in 2011, over six in ten respondents turn to national independent policy research institutes when they require research-based evidence related to social and economic policies. This is closely followed by relevant government ministries and agencies, and international agencies (mentions of the latter are up significantly from 2011, as are mentions of government-owned research institutes). International think tanks rank fifth overall.
- Respondents are more likely to look to national independent policy research institutes than international ones when looking for information (66% vs 51%), although both are used by majorities.

SLIDE 40 – By stakeholder type

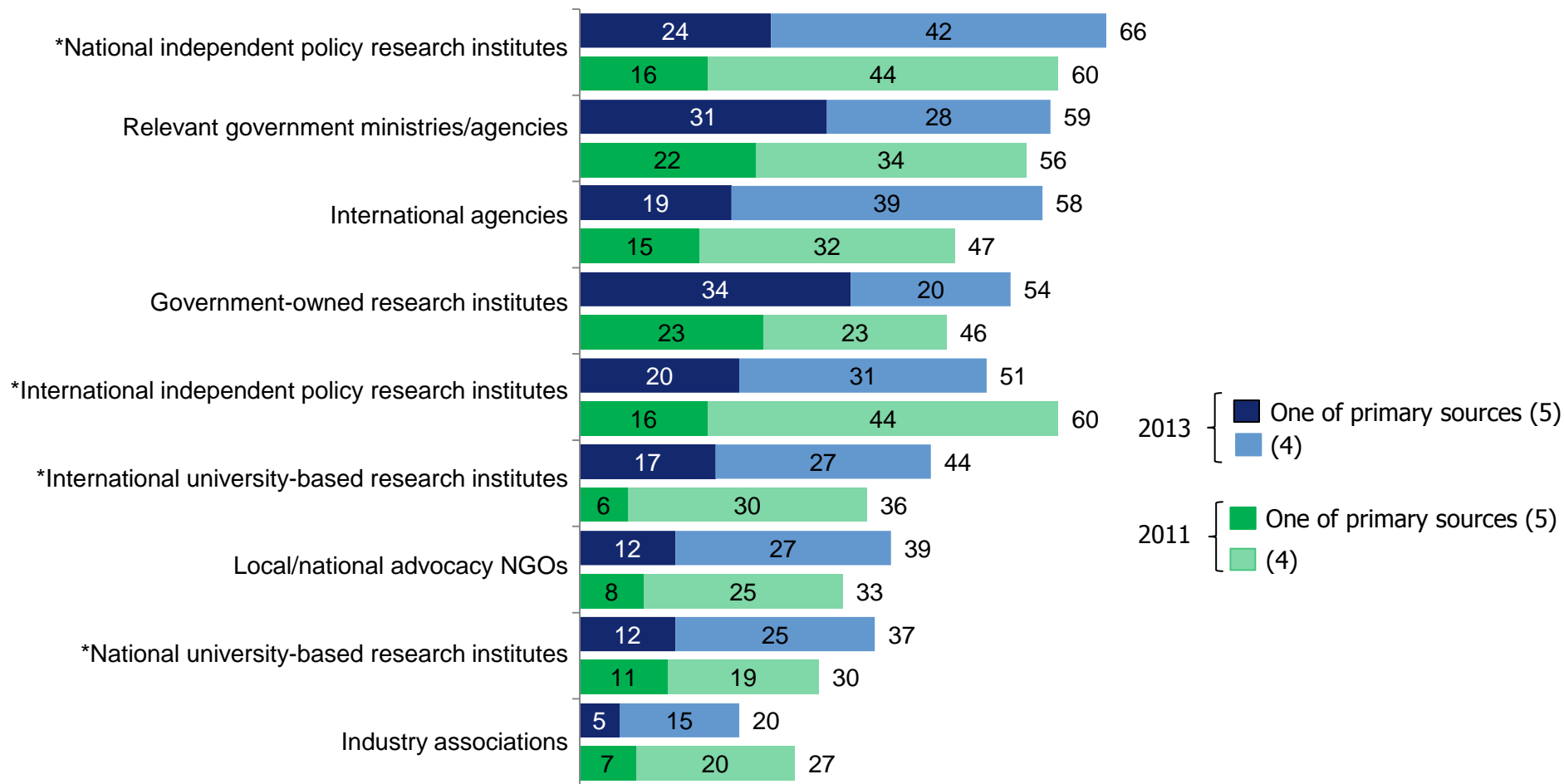
- National think tanks are the primary source of information for surveyed respondents from academia/research (80%), NGOs (71%), and media (68%).
- Respondents from elected government continue to rely more on government ministries, with national think tanks ranked second. For the private sector and multilaterals, use of think tanks has declined slightly, now ranking behind international agencies.
- International think tanks are an important source of information for majorities among research/academia, multilaterals, and NGOs surveyed, but are used less frequently by others.

SLIDE 41 – By country

- Respondents in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are strong users of national think tanks – more so than the regional average. Respondents in Pakistan point to international think tanks as their primary resource, along with international agencies. As was the case in 2011, those surveyed in India and Nepal say they rely first on government ministries, followed by national think tanks.

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

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

	Overall average 2013	Elected government	Non-elected government	Media	Multilateral /bilateral	NGO	Private sector	Research/ academia
National independent policy research institutes*	66	68	63	68	57	71	48	80
Relevant government ministries/agencies	59	77	73	66 ▲	47	57 ▲	41	57
International agencies	58 ▲	64	80 ▲	50	67	43 ▲	52 ▲	64 ▲
Government-owned research institutes	54	59	80 ▲	53	50 ▲	49 ▲	38 ▲	55 ▲
International independent policy research institutes*	51	45	47	45	60	57	34	64
International university-based research institutes	44	55 ▲	57 ▲	26	50 ▲	37	31 ▲	59
Local/national advocacy NGOs	39	45	37 ▲	55 ▲	27 ▼	59 ▲	10 ▼	27
National university-based research institutes	37	50 ▲	77 ▲	32	17	29	17	48 ▲
Industry associations	20	41 ▲	20 ▼	18 ▼	20	4	34 ▼	18

 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. 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 Country, South Asia, 2011–2013

	Overall average 2013	Bangladesh	India	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka
National independent policy research institutes*	66	83	63	56	60	76
Relevant government ministries/agencies	59	40	68	68	55	56
International agencies	58	63	50	51	68	68
Government-owned research institutes	54	35	56	56	53	68
International independent policy research institutes*	52	58	43	44	68	56
International university-based research institutes	44	48	34	37	65	49
Local/national advocacy NGOs	39	50	34	44	48	24
National university-based research institutes	37	38	31	41	43	41
Industry associations	20	18	11	10	23	46

 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. The 2011 data is therefore repeated across the National and International samples for general comparability.

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 43 – By South Asia total

- Similar to 2011, 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.
- Research quality is the top reason for turning to national and international think tanks, international agencies, and university-based research institutes (both national and international). Government-owned research institutes, government ministries, and local/national NGOs are chosen far more for the relevance of their research needs than quality of output. Industry associations are singled out for the high quality of their staff.
- The fact that it is the only organization available is a reason more commonly cited with regards to government ministries and industry associations than with other organizations. Personal contact is important with local NGOs.
- Only 8 respondents said they do not turn to think tanks for research-based evidence. Six of those said they were “not familiar enough with any such institution”, while the remaining two said “the research is not relevant to my needs”.

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

By Organization Type, South Asia, 2011–2013

	Overall average 2013	Government-owned research institutes (n=82)	Relevant government ministries/agencies (n=76)	National independent policy research institutes (n=59)	International independent policy research institutes (n=49)	International agencies (n=46)	National university-based research institutes (n=30)	International university-based research institutes (n=41)	Local/national advocacy NGOs (n=28)	Industry associations (n=11)
Relevance of research to needs	42	54 ▲	58 ▲	34	24	28 ▼	30	24 ▼	43 ▼	82 ▲
High quality of research	28	13 ▼	9	42	49	33	37	54 ▲	18	0 ▼
High quality of staff/researchers	9 ▲	5	0	10	14	13 ▲	17	15 ▲	4 ▼	0
Personal Contact	8	4	7	7	2	13 ▲	7	2 ▼	21 ▲	9
Only type of organization available	5	6 ▼	12	5	4	2	7	0	4	9
Only type of organization that is familiar	1	0	1	2	0	0	3	0	4	0

Top mention

▲ Increase of 10% or more from 2011 to 2013

Second mention

▼ 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. The 2011 data is therefore repeated across the National and International samples for general comparability.

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 are equally well rated, ranking best of all “in-country” sources of information.

SLIDE 46 – By South Asia total

- International and national think tanks are rated highest in quality according to respondents, followed by international university-based research institutes and international agencies. Ratings are generally up from 2011 for these organizations.
- Local organizations (other than national think tanks) do not rate as highly as international ones when it comes to perceived research quality.
- While stakeholder 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 47 – By stakeholder type

- International think tanks receive first place ranking for quality by surveyed multilaterals. They place second for quality by all other surveyed groups except elected government.
- Surveyed media and NGOs give their top ranking for quality to national think tanks, which are also highly rated by elected government respondents.
- Respondents from government (elected and non-elected), private sector and research/academia give their top ratings to international university-based research institutes.

SLIDE 48 – By country

- The perceived quality ratings of national think tanks are highest among respondents in Bangladesh and India. They also rate highly among respondents in Sri Lanka, although behind international agencies. International think tanks receive second place ratings for quality in all countries except Sri Lanka, where they rank fourth.
- In Nepal and Pakistan, respondents give their top ratings for quality to international university-based research institutes.

SLIDE 49 – By stakeholder type

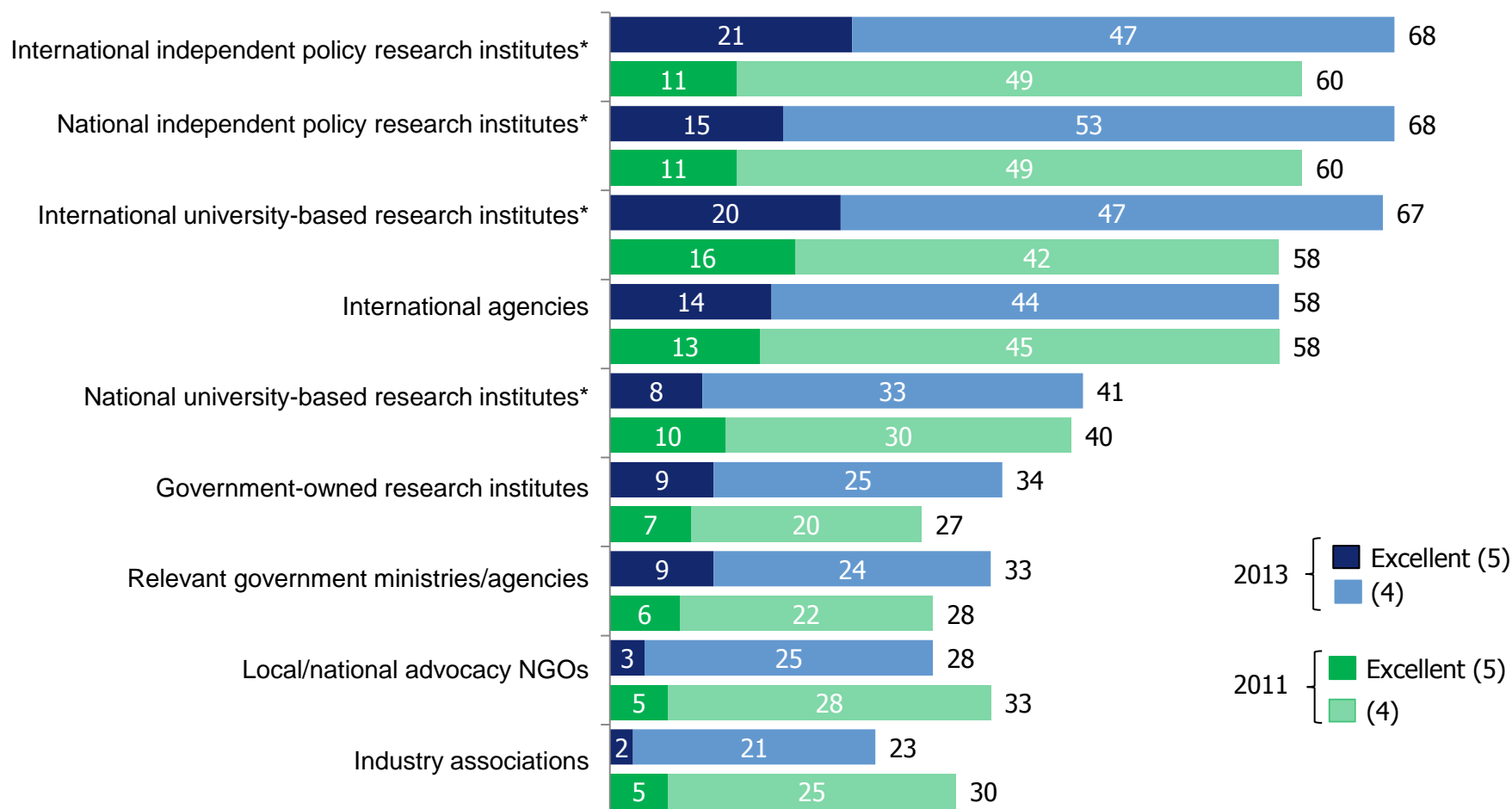
- International think tanks tend to receive better quality ratings than national think tanks from surveyed NGOs, media, and elected government. Surveyed non-elected government, multilaterals, and private sector tend to favour national over international think tanks, while research/academia do not distinguish between the two.
- Think tank quality ratings have generally improved since 2011, except according to private sector respondents where ratings have declined somewhat.

SLIDE 50 – By country

- Respondents in Bangladesh and India rate national think tanks higher in quality than international think tanks. Stakeholders in Pakistan and Nepal rate international think tanks far higher than national think tanks, while those in Sri Lanka do not differentiate much between the two.
- Think tank quality ratings have improved in all countries since 2011.

Quality Ratings of Research Provided by...

South Asia, 2011–2013



Subsample: Those who use each type of organization (n=203–231 in 2011, n=203–234 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, South Asia, 2011–2013

	Overall average 2013	Elected government	Non-elected government	Media	Multilateral/ bilateral	NGO	Private sector	Research/ academia
International independent policy research institutes*	68	55	75	61	80	73	54	70
National independent policy research institutes*	68	71	64	76	55	79	48	69
International university-based research institutes	67	72 ▲	82 ▲	59	73	56	59 ▲	71 ▲
International agencies	58	53	66	59	59	53 ▲	48	66
National university-based research institutes	41	50	57	52	30	35	24 ▼	43 ▲
Government-owned research institutes	34	45	57 ▲	33	24	26 ▲	23 ▲	35
Relevant government ministries/agencies	33	55	45	42 ▲	18	29 ▲	28	26 ▲
Local/national advocacy NGOs	28	32	24	40	7 ▼	38	19	28 ▲
Industry associations	23	32	19 ▼	29 ▼	13	13	48 ▲	19 ▼

 Top rating

▲ Increase of 10% or more from 2011 to 2013

 Second rating

▼ Decrease of 10% or less from 2011 to 2013

Subsample: Those who use each type of organization (n=203–231 in 2011, n=203–234 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, South Asia, 2011–2013

	Overall average 2013	Bangladesh	India	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka
International independent policy research institutes*	68	66	69	68	73	64
National independent policy research institutes*	68	77	74	51	61	68
International university-based research institutes	67	66	59	72 ▲	79 ▲	66 ▲
International agencies	58	65	53	50 ▼	54	74 ▲
National university-based research institutes	41	31	39	47	37	56 ▲
Government-owned research institutes	34	22	40 ▲	35 ▲	27	39
Relevant government ministries/agencies	33	22	44 ▲	40	30	20 ▼
Local/national advocacy NGOs	28	21 ▼	31	33	34	21
Industry associations	23	14	18 ▼	12	27 ▼	47 ▲

 Top rating

 Second rating

▲ Increase of 10% or more from 2011 to 2013

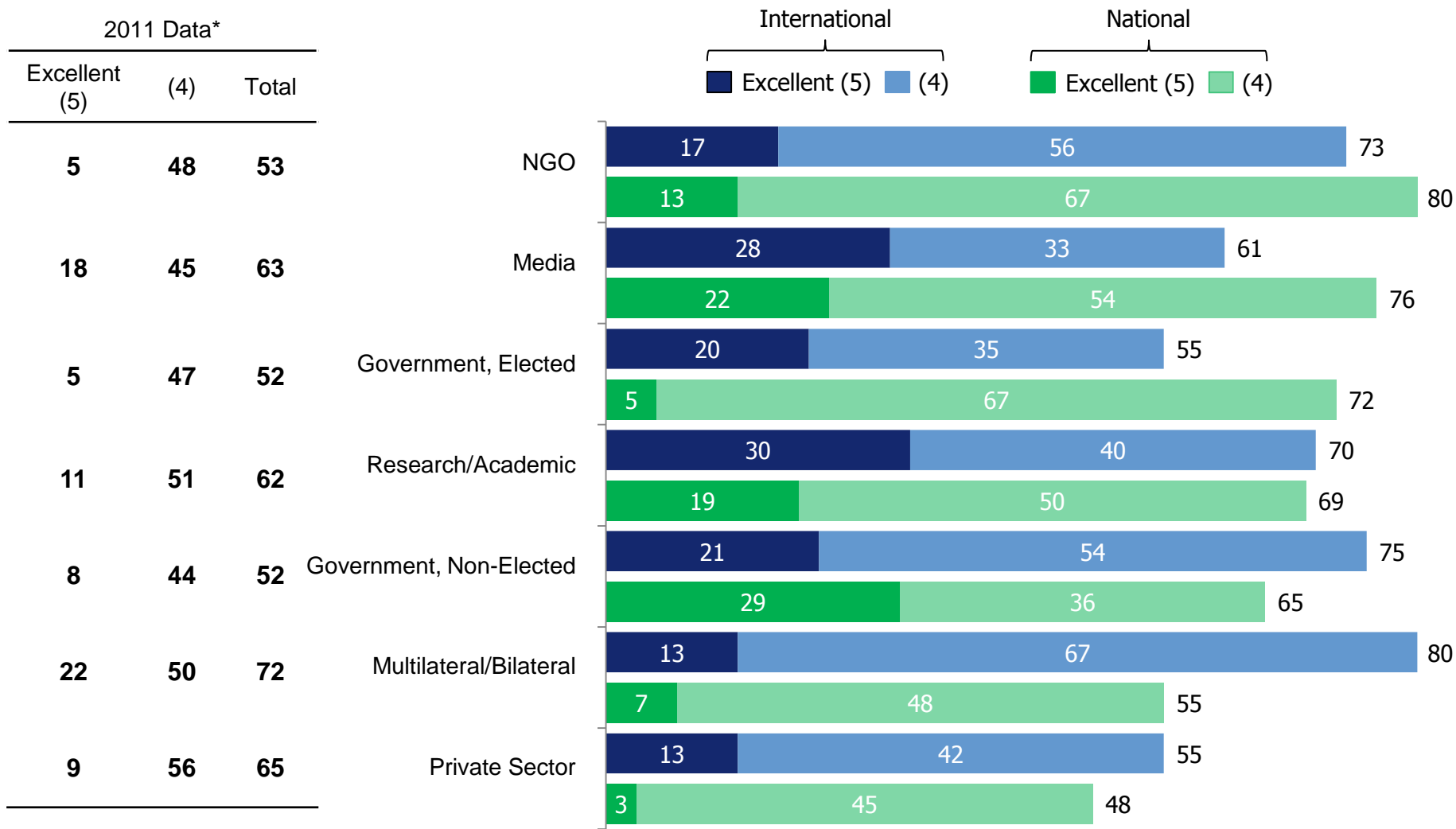
▼ Decrease of 10% or less from 2011 to 2013

Subsample: Those who use each type of organization (n=203–231 in 2011, n=203–234 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, South Asia, 2011–2013



Subsample: Respondents who use Independent policy research institutes ($n=229$ in 2011, $n=234$ for national and $n=229$ for international in 2013)



*“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.



Quality Ratings of Research Provided by Think Tanks

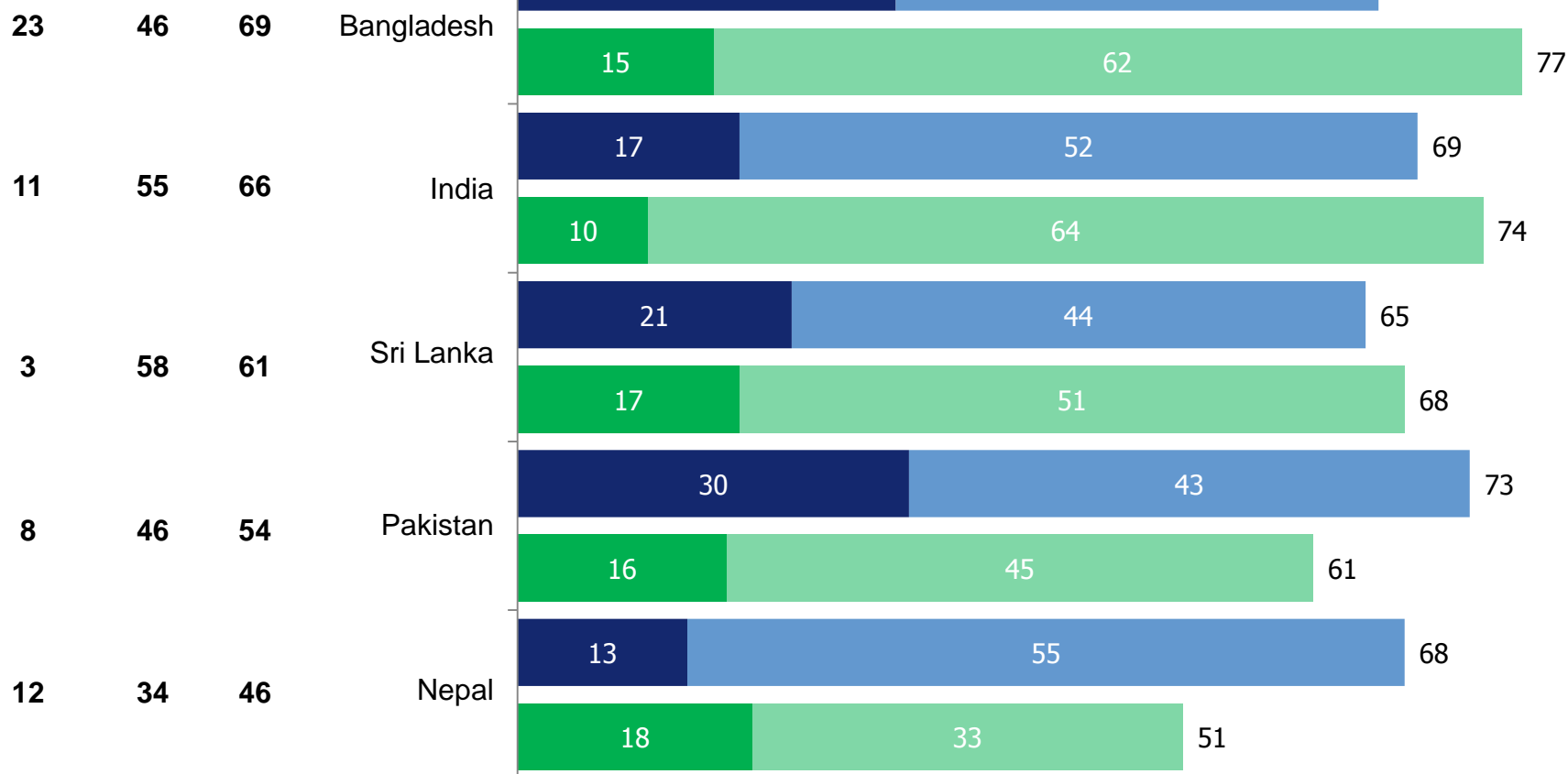
By Country, South Asia, 2011–2013

2011 Data*

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

International
 Excellent (5)  (4)

National
 Excellent (5)  (4)



Subsample: Respondents who use Independent policy research institutes (2011 $n=229$; $n=234$ for national and $n=229$ for international in 2013)

*"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.

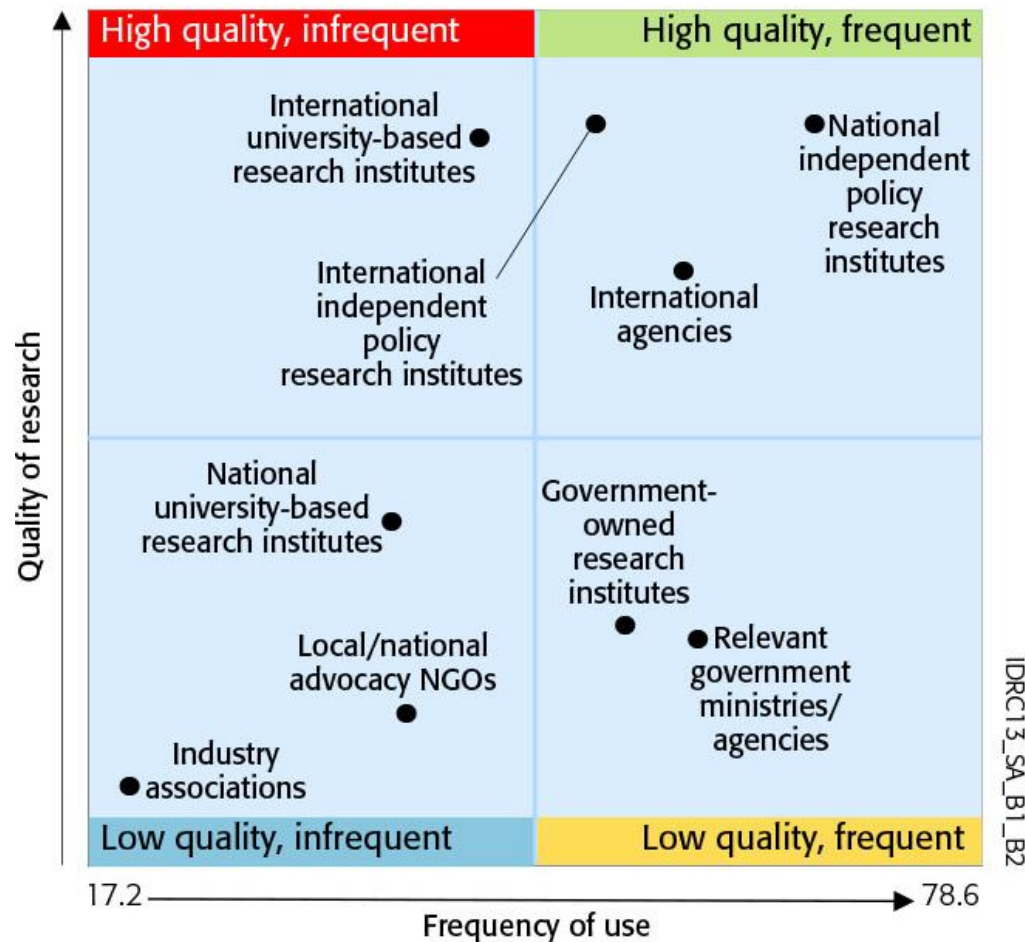
Think tanks are in an ideal position, as they are seen to deliver high quality research and are frequently used. However, in a pattern similar to 2011, quality does not seem to be the only driver of use: both high quality and low quality sources of information are used frequently by respondents.

SLIDE 52 – 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. National think tanks are frequently used by majorities in all countries, particularly Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. International think tanks are used frequently by majorities in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, but less so in India and Nepal despite their recognized quality level. A lack of familiarity with international think tanks may be a barrier to their more frequent use.

Quality of Research vs Frequency of Use

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



International and national think tanks are recognized for their high quality by majorities in all surveyed countries.

Use of international think tanks is somewhat less in India and Nepal, perhaps due to lack of familiarity with such organizations.

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Familiarity and Level of Interaction with Think Tanks

Familiarity with think tanks has improved since 2011 in Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Nepal, while remaining stable in India and declining minimally in Bangladesh. Word-of-mouth and media exposure help to bolster familiarity.

SLIDE 55 – Familiarity, by country

- In Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Nepal, there has been a substantial increase since 2011 in familiarity with the think tanks rated. Interestingly, it is generally the number of people saying they are now “very familiar” that has increased significantly from the last time this question was asked.
- In Bangladesh, we see a slight decline in think tank familiarity, with the number of people saying “very familiar” having shifted downward. There has been no significant change in think tank familiarity in India since 2011.

SLIDE 56 – Length of engagement, by country

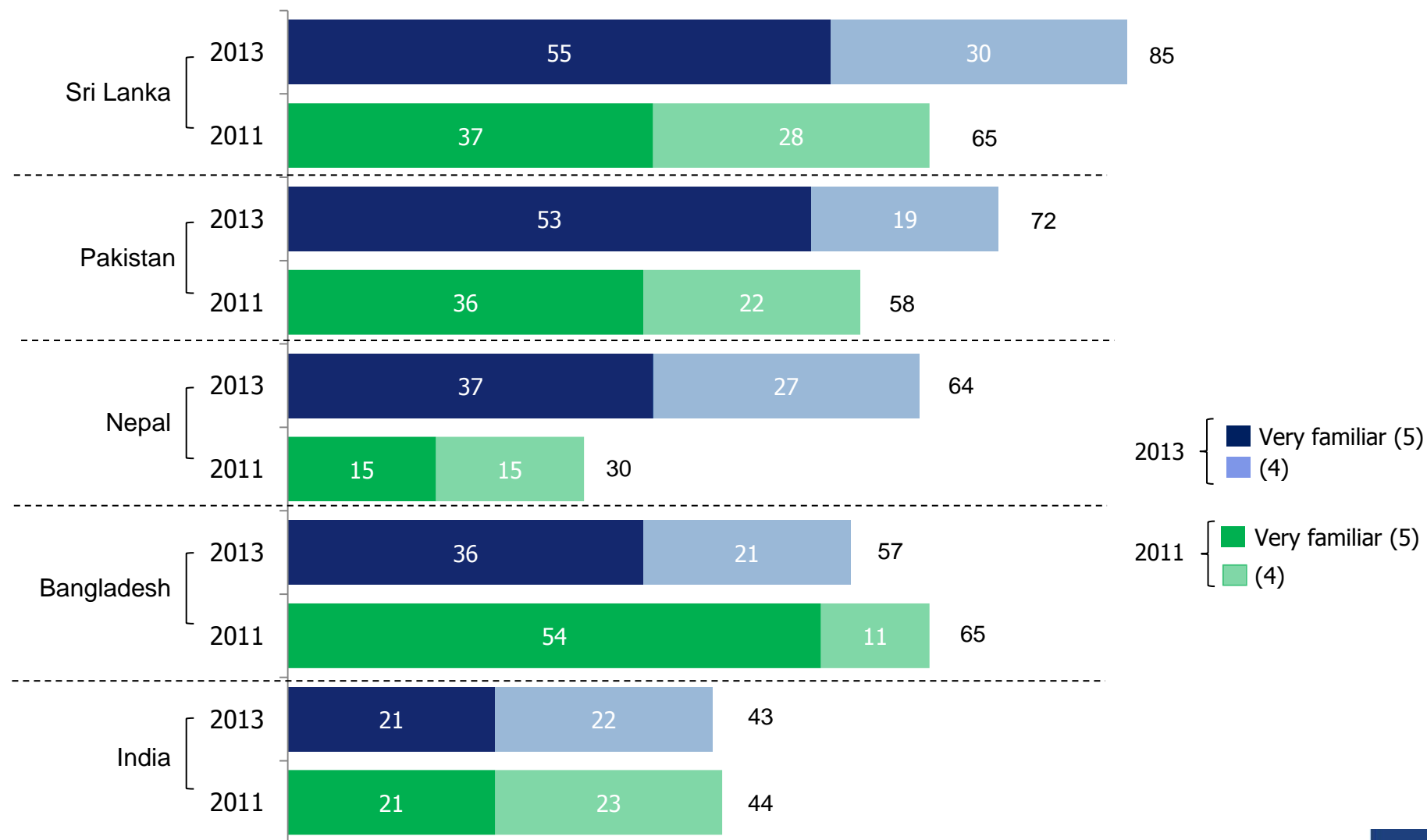
- The majority of respondents in all countries have known regional think tanks for more than 5 years. Nepal and India, however, have a large number of respondents who have only recently become familiar with think tanks in the past 5 years (49% and 42%, respectively). Less than a quarter of respondents in all markets have known think tanks 10 years or more.

SLIDE 57 – Interaction, by South Asia 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. Many respondents also communicate with think tank staff, receive its publications, or use its website more than a couple of times a year. Over half say they have attended an event organized by a think tank over the past year. While some do refer to annual reports issued by think tanks, one third have never read one.

Familiarity with Prompted Think Tanks

Average of All Think Tanks Rated Within a Country,
by Country, South Asia, 2011–2013



Number of Years Familiar with Think Tank's Work

By Country, South Asia, 2013

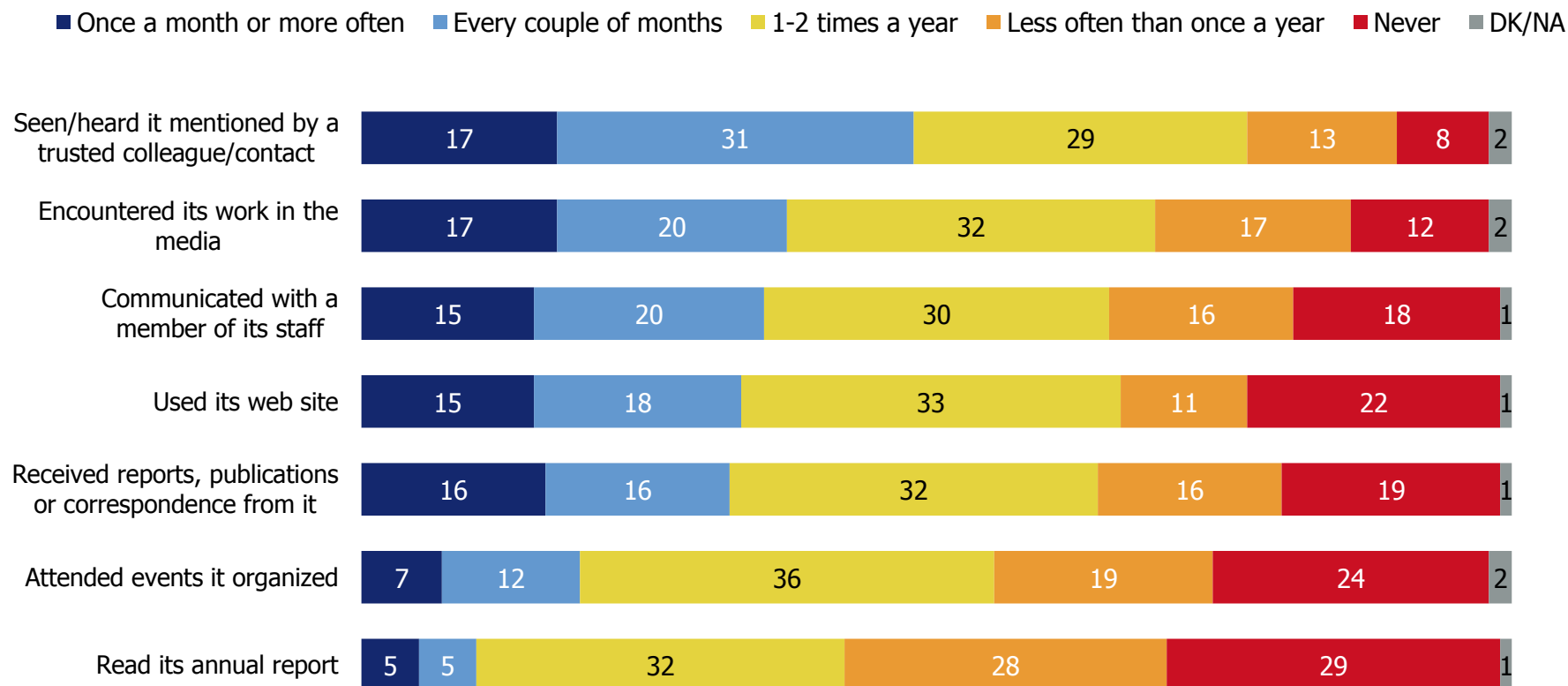
	Bangladesh	India	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka
Less than one year	0	10	6	0	0
1 to less than 5 years	31	33	43	27	18
5 to less than 10 years	22	28	46	29	45
10 to less than 20 years	30	15	6	25	31
20 years or more	12	9	0	16	6

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, South Asia,
2013



IDRC

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Think Tank Performance Ratings

Think tanks are seen as knowledgeable providers of high quality research, however, many feel the dissemination of the information could be improved.

(Note: Respondents were asked to rate up to two think tanks in their country (9 in India) 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 importantly, are knowledgeable about the process of policy development. Think tanks are also perceived to maintain a quality research staff with good regional knowledge and a focus on high priority issues within the respective countries. These strengths were also identified in 2011.

Areas to Improve

- Information provision is clearly an area requiring attention: some feel think tanks could improve upon their transparency and openness, and in the dissemination of their research and recommendations. The performance ratings for “value of in-person events” is also relatively lower in many countries. These performance areas were also clear areas to improve in 2011.
- Many believe think tanks could be more effective at partnering with public policy actors and engagement with policy makers. This perception was shared in 2011.

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Research Centre



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développement international

Ways to Improve Think Tanks in South Asia

A continued focus on quality – both in terms of research and staff – continues to be key to improving the perceptions of think tanks and their outputs.

SLIDE 66 – by South Asia total

- When asked which of a list of factors is most important for improving think tank performance in their country, nearly nine in ten respondents each point to improving the quality of the research and increasing the availability of trained and experienced staff.
- Three-quarters of respondents believe that having more audience-friendly presentations of the research findings could be valuable; a similar number point to improved governance.
- Views have generally remained unchanged since 2011.

SLIDE 67 - by stakeholder type

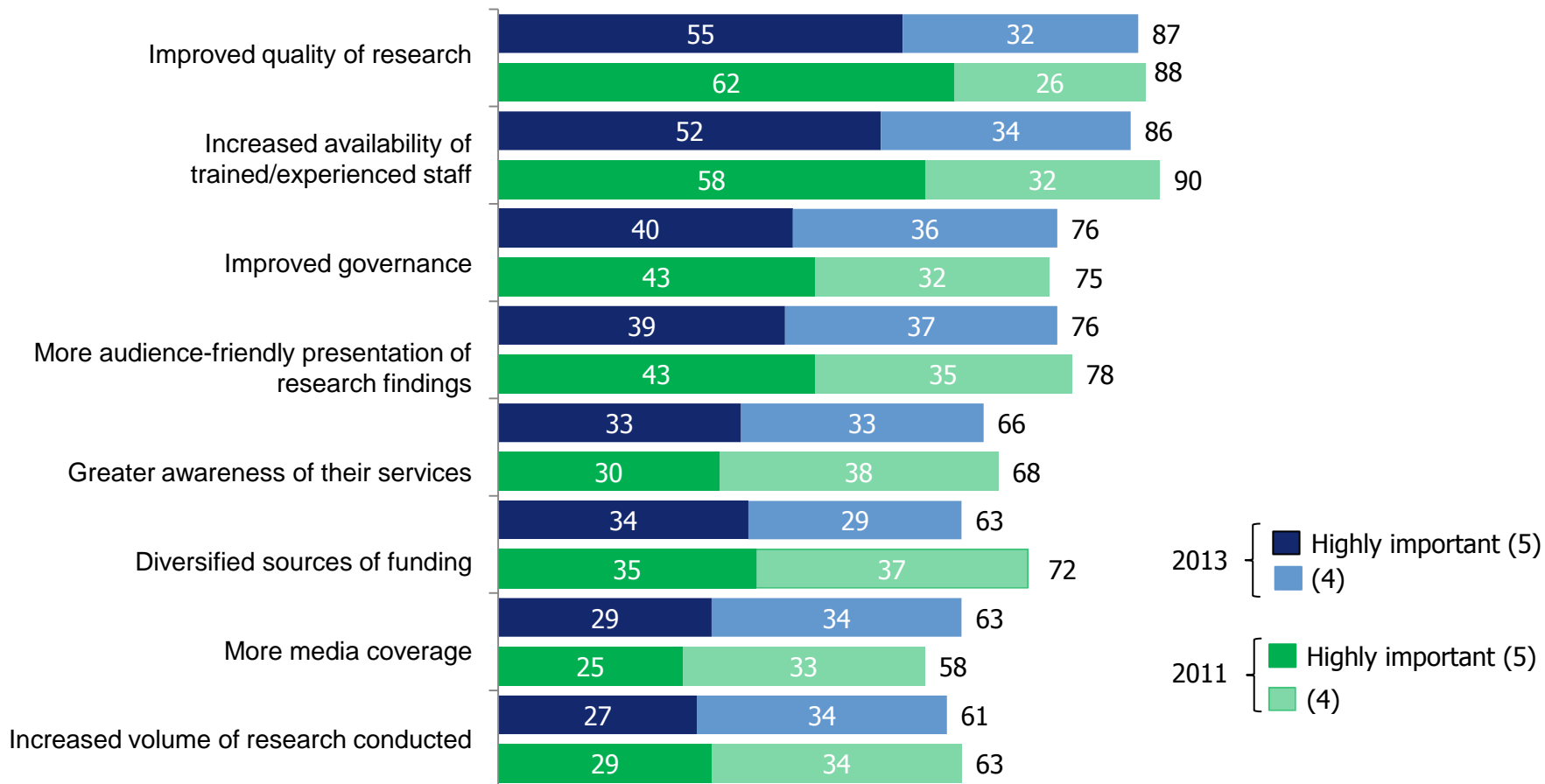
- Surveyed elected and non-elected government officials, media, multilateral organizations, NGOs, and researchers/academics agree that improving the quality of research and increasing the availability of experienced research staff are the most important factors to improve think tank performance. Government respondents place high value on improved governance as well.
- Private sector respondents have a slightly different view, saying that improved perceptions will come as a result of having more audience-friendly presentations.

SLIDE 68 - by country

- As is the case with the different stakeholder audiences, improving the research quality and increasing the availability of experienced staff are considered across most South Asian 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),
South Asia, 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, South Asia, 2011–2013

	Overall average 2013	Elected government	Non-elected government	Media	Multilateral/ bilateral	NGO	Private sector	Research/ academia
Improved quality of research	87	73 ▼	87	89	87	92 ▲	90	89
Increased availability of trained/experienced staff	86	82 ▼	93	84	80 ▼	88	90	86 ▼
More audience-friendly presentation of research findings	76	59 ▼	77 ▼	71 ▼	77	82	93 ▲	68
Improved governance	76	77 ▼	87	82	67 ▲	76 ▲	83 ▲	66 ▼
Greater awareness of their services	66	68 ▼	67 ▼	79 ▲	53	65 ▲	79 ▲	55 ▼
Diversified sources of funding	63	45 ▼	70 ▼	58 ▼	57	63	69	70 ▼
More media coverage	63	59 ▼	70	82	50	65 ▲	66 ▲	48 ▼
Increased volume of research conducted	61	55 ▼	70	74	50	53	72	57 ▼



 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, South Asia, 2011–2013

	Overall average 2013	Bangladesh	India	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka
Improved quality of research	87	83 ▼	93	85	90	83
Increased availability of trained/experienced staff	86	93	84	88	85	85
Improved governance	76	78	74	85 ▲	78	68 ▼
More audience-friendly presentation of research findings	76	80	76	76	68	78
Greater awareness of their services	66	63 ▼	73	59	55	76 ▲
Diversified sources of funding	63	63 ▼	64	66	63	59 ▼
More media coverage	63	63	55	71 ▲	60	73
Increased volume of research conducted	61	58 ▼	58	63	73 ▲	59

 Top Rating
 Second Rating

▲ 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 5 participating South Asian countries, broadly centering around the following key suggestions:

- Think tanks are urged to **be non-political and to conduct objective research**. Many respondents also stated they wanted higher quality, evidence-based research. Some stakeholders believed that the respondent banks that think tanks used were limited and they should capture the perceptions of a wider audience. Respondents also said that think tanks should be more transparent, especially about their research methodology.
- Stakeholders want think tanks to **better communicate their findings** in places that are easy to access, such as through the think tank's website. Respondents think research reports should be more easily understandable, with less jargon, and should be available in multiple languages. Furthermore, stakeholders want think tanks to be more open to communicating with the media.
- Respondents want think tanks to **conduct relevant, timely research** that will lead to action, such as helping to make policy decisions. They are encouraged to collaborate with community groups and other stakeholders while still remaining independent. Many respondents stated that think tanks should better address the issues of people who are marginalized.

Advice for Think Tanks to Better Assist Respondents in Their Work

“Concentrate on practical, urgent and important issues!”

Bangladesh, Research/Academia

“Most of the time they maintain a respondent bank, so every time they go to the same types of people. They are not very diversified to accommodate the feelings or perceptions of different types of audiences.”

Bangladesh, Private Sector

“To collaborate with Universities and inspire them to take up research on issues that are of importance arising out of national compulsions and not necessarily to toe the line of what is seen as ‘important’ by their peers in academia.”

India, Research/Academia

“Analyze from the perspective of structural factors of Nepali Society. Look at the issues from the marginalized perspective.”

Nepal, NGO

“We would like to see a greater connection with facts and evidence collected from the ground with the participation of the concerned stakeholders. ... Implementation of policies need to be followed up to ensure that the goals are reached and regulatory and monitoring mechanisms are set up.”

India, NGO

“They have to be much more open to media and disclose information to media.”

Nepal, Media

Advice for Think Tanks to Better Assist Respondents in Their Work

“Improve the quality and for that they need quality of man power and also frequent interactions with those who are directly or indirectly involved in policy making.”
Pakistan, Research/Academia

“Every researcher has some bias and as a researcher or as a think tank, that bias needs to be minimized as much as possible.”
Pakistan, NGO

“Being as objective and fact-based as possible. Ensuring research is evidence based.”
Bangladesh, Government, Non-Elected

“At the moment, some of our think tanks do not share their publications online. Print copies are few and hard to obtain. They simply must improve dissemination and accessibility to their products.”
Sri Lanka, Media

“Launch a forum to discuss, debate, and disseminate important research findings to ensure follow-up actions on research.”
India, Government, Elected

“They should keep their research very current and be very friendly. I mean when they are presenting their data; to make it friendly, so they can absorb what they are trying to say and it should be interesting so that they would read it from beginning to end.”
Sri Lanka, Private sector

“They need to tell timely information in a timely manner and transparency should also be there.”
Sri Lanka, Multilateral/Bilateral



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