



International Development  
Research Centre

CRDI

Centre de recherches pour le  
développement international



# Think Tank Initiative Policy Community Survey 2013

## *Report on Africa*

September 2013



evidence and ideas. **applied**

The survey questions and results reported herein are provided on a confidential basis to the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). IDRC is free to use the findings in whatever manner it chooses, including releasing them to the public or media.

GlobeScan Incorporated subscribes to the standards of the World Association of Opinion and Marketing Research Professionals (ESOMAR). ESOMAR sets minimum disclosure standards for studies that are released to the public or the media. The purpose is to maintain the integrity of market research by avoiding misleading interpretations. If you are considering the dissemination of the findings, please consult with us regarding the form and content of publication. ESOMAR standards require us to correct any misinterpretation.

**Project: 2575, GlobeScan®**

*For more information, contact:*

**Femke de Man**  
**Director**  
**[Femke.deMan@GlobeScan.com](mailto:Femke.deMan@GlobeScan.com)**

**Salim Binbrek**  
**Research Analyst**  
**[Salim.Binbrek@GlobeScan.com](mailto:Salim.Binbrek@GlobeScan.com)**



**GlobeScan**  
evidence and ideas. **applied**

65 St. Clair Avenue East, Suite 900  
Toronto, Canada, M4T 2Y3

[www.GlobeScan.com](http://www.GlobeScan.com)

Introduction and Objectives	4
Methodology	5
Key Findings	10
Information Required for Policy Making in Africa: Type, Accessibility, Source	19
Research-Based Evidence: Availability, Relevance and Quality	37
Familiarity and Level of Interaction with Think Tanks	55
Think Tank Performance Ratings	60
Ways to Improve Think Tanks in Africa	69
Appendix: Think Tanks Tested	77

- 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, Latin America, and South Asia.
- 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 African survey.
- 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 10 African countries, from April 4<sup>th</sup> to July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013.
- The participating African countries include Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda. Note that in 2009/10, Mali was included as a participating country; however, it was not included in this wave of research due to ongoing conflict and civil disruptions in the country in 2013.
- Respondents were contacted by phone and given the option to complete the interview over the phone or online. Where necessary, face-to-face interviews were conducted. The survey was offered in English and French.

		Africa									
Total		Benin	Burkina Faso	Ghana	Nigeria	Senegal	Ethiopia	Kenya	Rwanda	Tanzania	Uganda
Total	409	46	40	37	41	44	40	40	40	41	40
Online	118	10	9	4	7	11	32	11	12	12	10
Offline	291	36	31	33	34	33	8	29	28	29	30
Telephone	22	12	1	0	2	0	0	0	6	1	0
Face-to-face	269	24	30	33	32	33	8	29	22	28	30

- 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 large well-known 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

		Africa									
	Total	Benin	Burkina Faso	Ghana	Nigeria	Senegal	Ethiopia	Kenya	Rwanda	Tanzania	Uganda
Total	409	46	40	37	41	44	40	40	40	41	40
Government, elected	41	5	3	3	3	4	5	5	4	6	3
Government, non-elected	71	7	7	7	8	8	7	4	6	8	9
Media	55	8	5	9	5	4	5	5	3	5	6
Multilateral/bilateral	42	1	5	3	4	5	7	5	4	4	4
NGO	62	7	7	7	5	7	3	7	9	4	6
Private sector	61	7	9	4	7	7	4	8	4	5	6
Research/academia	77	11	4	4	9	9	9	6	10	9	6

# 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.

		Africa									
	Total	Benin	Burkina Faso	Ethiopia	Ghana	Kenya	Nigeria	Rwanda	Senegal	Tanzania	Uganda
Total	2663	204	229	323	199	365	182	430	218	207	306
GlobeScan	1302	123	195	192	84	84	54	195	154	79	142
IDRC & TTI grantee organizations	1361	81	34	131	115	281	128	235	64	128	164



- **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 African survey in 2009/10, 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 2010 and 2013 are not identical.**

## A Note on Charts:

- It is important to recognize that the **African averages shown in the following charts cover 11 countries in 2010, but only 10 countries in 2013 due to Mali's exclusion.**
- 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.

**IDRC**

International Development  
Research Centre



**CRDI**

Centre de recherches pour le  
développement international

## Key Findings

## Key Information Needs

***As in 2010, stakeholders mostly require information on economic, fiscal and monetary issues and poverty alleviation to help with their involvement in the national policy making process. Interest in many topics has risen since 2010, suggesting a greater thirst for information from outside their organization.***

- Strong majorities of respondents across all stakeholder groups and across most countries are looking for information on economic, fiscal and monetary issues, as well as on poverty alleviation, to help with their involvement in the national policy making process. These were the top themes in 2010 as well.
- Interest in food security has increased significantly from three years ago, while education and environment also factor as key topic areas. Foreign affairs information receives 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 and poverty alleviation standing out.
- Information priorities are quite similar from one country to the next. However, while stakeholders surveyed in Ghana, Benin, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda show increased interest across the majority of information topics (perhaps suggesting a more comprehensive approach to policy development), those in Rwanda and Ethiopia demonstrate a decline in interest on a number of themes.
- Overall, interest in most of the topics tested has risen since 2010, suggesting a greater thirst for information outside their organization.

## 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.***

- Obtaining information about education, health care, food security, human rights, gender issues, economic issues, and poverty alleviation is seen as relatively easier, while information about energy, foreign affairs, trade/industry, and natural resources is the most difficult to obtain, according to those surveyed.
- While the ease of obtaining information has not shifted much for most topics since 2010, respondents do believe that human rights information has become more readily available. Information on the environment – one of the key topic areas of interest – is less accessible than respondents would like.
- At a stakeholder level, the private sector respondents appear to have the most trouble accessing various types of information. They, along with non-elected government and the media, report a decline in information availability on certain topics since 2010.
- 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 continent.

## Information Sources and Distribution Methods

***Readership of policy briefs remains modest, and is only one of a variety of information sources used by stakeholders surveyed to inform their understanding of national policy development. 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 little over half of respondents to inform their understanding of national policy development, suggesting there is room to broaden the readership of these documents.
- Publications and reports are the predominant source of information used to increase respondent understanding of national policy development. This is true for all stakeholder audiences and in most countries. This is followed by data banks/databases, conferences or events, and discussions with colleagues. Policy briefs, consulting with experts, and information received via the news are considered mid-level sources of information, while newsletters and books are used by less than half of respondents to inform their understanding. 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 multilateral organizations, followed by the private sector, academics and researchers, and non-elected government. Less than half of elected government and media surveyed use policy briefs to inform their understanding. Tanzanians and Ugandans surveyed use policy briefs most often, while their use is rarer by respondents in Benin, Nigeria and Burkina Faso.
- Across nearly all African 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. Social media and blogging have almost no traction. Only in Tanzania and Ethiopia does print have a slight advantage over websites.

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

***National think tanks are used more often than international ones by respondents, except among academics/researchers where the latter are their primary source of information overall. While awareness of think tanks has grown since 2010 in many areas, a lack of familiarity remains the main reason why people do not turn to think tanks more often – instead, government agencies remain the primary source of information for most.***

- As in 2010, most respondents turn to relevant government ministries and agencies when they require research-based evidence related to social and economic policies. This is closely followed by government-owned research institutes (where mentions are up significantly from 2010) and international agencies (mentions are down from 2010). Think tanks rank fourth (for national) and sixth (for international) overall. While the use of independent think tanks has increased slightly since 2010, there is room for further development.
- Sources that are used less frequently include university-based research institutes and industry associations.
- While government ministries/agencies are the primary source for most stakeholder audiences, academics and researchers surveyed are more inclined to turn to international think tanks. Aside from this audience, however, it is notable that respondents are more likely to look to national independent policy research institutes than international ones when looking for information.
- At the country level, government ministries or government-owned research institutes are the primary sources of information everywhere. With regard to think tanks, stakeholders surveyed in Benin and Burkina Faso rely least on national think tanks for their information needs, while well over half of those in Ghana, Tanzania, and Uganda do rely on them. International think tanks are rarely used by those surveyed in Burkina Faso, Kenya and Uganda.
- A lack of familiarity is the most common reason cited for not using think tanks. Familiarity with think tanks has improved since 2010 amongst respondents in half of the African countries surveyed (it has gone down in Senegal and Benin). Word-of-mouth, engagement with staff, 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. International organizations are recognized as having research of high quality, but are sometimes less accessible to respondents. Local organizations are more likely to be seen as having research that is relevant to the stakeholder's needs and are sometimes the only information available.***

- Similar to 2010, when stakeholders were asked why they turn to specific organizations for their information needs, almost all say they choose the organization because it produces research relevant to their needs and of high quality.
- Government-owned research institutes, government ministries, local/national NGOs, and industry associations are chosen far more for the relevance of their research needs than quality of output. These institutions are also sometimes the only organizations deemed available to respondents.
- International organizations are most highly rated in terms of the quality of research they provide to stakeholders to work on national policy issues – with international think tanks receiving the top ranking for quality from surveyed elected government, multilaterals, private sector and academics. National think tanks rank close behind, and are best of all “in-country” sources of information for research quality.
- Think tank quality ratings have improved since 2010, except among media and NGO respondents where ratings have declined.
- Respondents who are more likely to see think tanks as providing high quality research are more likely to use them as a source of information. However, limited accessibility and/or awareness may be barriers to people using think tank information more frequently.
- At a country level, the profile of national and international think tanks is consistently higher among respondents in Ethiopia, Tanzania and Ghana, and lower in Uganda and Burkina Faso.

## Strengths and Areas for Improvement

***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, respondents believe that think tanks do not have adequate infrastructure in place to function effectively. Information provision is clearly also 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 “providing informed critique” is also relatively lower in many countries, and many believe think tanks could be more effective at partnering with public policy actors.
- Lessons learned from highly rated think tanks, such as those in Kenya and Ghana, could be adapted and applied by others to help improve the perceived quality of research and research staff and their engagement with policy makers, among others. The perceived performance of think tanks in Kenya and Ghana, as well as in Senegal, Benin, Uganda and Tanzania, is relatively good among surveyed stakeholders, across most measures of think tank performance. Think tanks in Ethiopia, Rwanda, Burkina Faso and Nigeria are less well perceived by respondents there.



## 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, working with government so that research results are applied to policy making, and taking steps to ensure a greater understanding of the local context on a wider range of issues.***

- 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. Elected government officials have a slightly different view, saying that improved perceptions will come as a result of increasing stakeholder awareness of think tank services. Indeed, most stakeholder audiences are more inclined than they were in 2010 to say that this is an important factor.
- Think tanks are urged to better communicate the results of their research: to disseminate it to a wider audience using media and private sector partnerships, to make reports and presentations more easily understandable (with less jargon), and to seek feedback to make sure outputs are relevant.
- Working with government – while still retaining independence from government and political influence – is considered very important, as improving governmental access to information is crucial for the research to be applied to policy making.
- Stakeholders surveyed want think tanks to gain a better understanding of the local context, to diversify research away from only economic analysis, and to collect more relevant primary data on a variety of issues such as youth and gender. Local staff recruitment and training – and less reliance on international consultants – are often cited as areas for improvement. The involvement and monitoring of local actors who are directly impacted by the research or policies is also considered very important.

# Summary of Key Findings

	10-Country African average	Benin	Burkina Faso	Ethiopia	Ghana	Kenya	Nigeria	Rwanda	Senegal	Tanzania	Uganda
% that use policy briefs	56	30	48	65	62	53	39	58	66	71	70
% that use national think tanks as primary source of info (4+5 out of 5)	42	30	13	45	65	48	29	33	41	59	60
% that use international think tanks as primary source of info (4+5 out of 5)	35	37	20	38	41	18	41	40	45	44	28
Quality of research provided by national think tanks (% saying excellent: 4+5 out of 5)	52	43	33	53	71	56	43	40	54	67	50
Quality of research provided by international think tanks (% saying excellent: 4+5 out of 5)	60	54	48	73	64	44	71	62	56	70	50
Familiarity with think tanks (% rating very familiar: 4+5 out of 5 – average across all TTs tested)	54	48 ▼	43	59	88 ▲	68	29	44 ▲	35 ▼	71 ▲	55 ▲
Think tank performance on specific measures (see slide notes for measures)	--	Avg	Below avg	Below avg	Above avg	Above avg	Below avg	Below avg	Avg	Above avg	Avg to above avg

**IDRC**

International Development  
Research Centre



**CRDI**

Centre de recherches pour le  
développement international

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

# Types of Information Required for Policy Making

The majority of respondents are looking for information on economic, fiscal and monetary issues, as well as on poverty alleviation, to help with their involvement in the national policy making process.

## SLIDE 21 – by Africa 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 2010, respondents are most likely to say they require information on economic, fiscal and monetary issues, and on poverty alleviation (69% and 65%, respectively). Interest in food security information has increased by 12 percent (to 61%), while another six in ten each are looking for information on education and the environment.
- Interest in most of the topics tested has risen since 2010, suggesting a thirst for information from outside their organization.

## SLIDE 22 – by stakeholder type

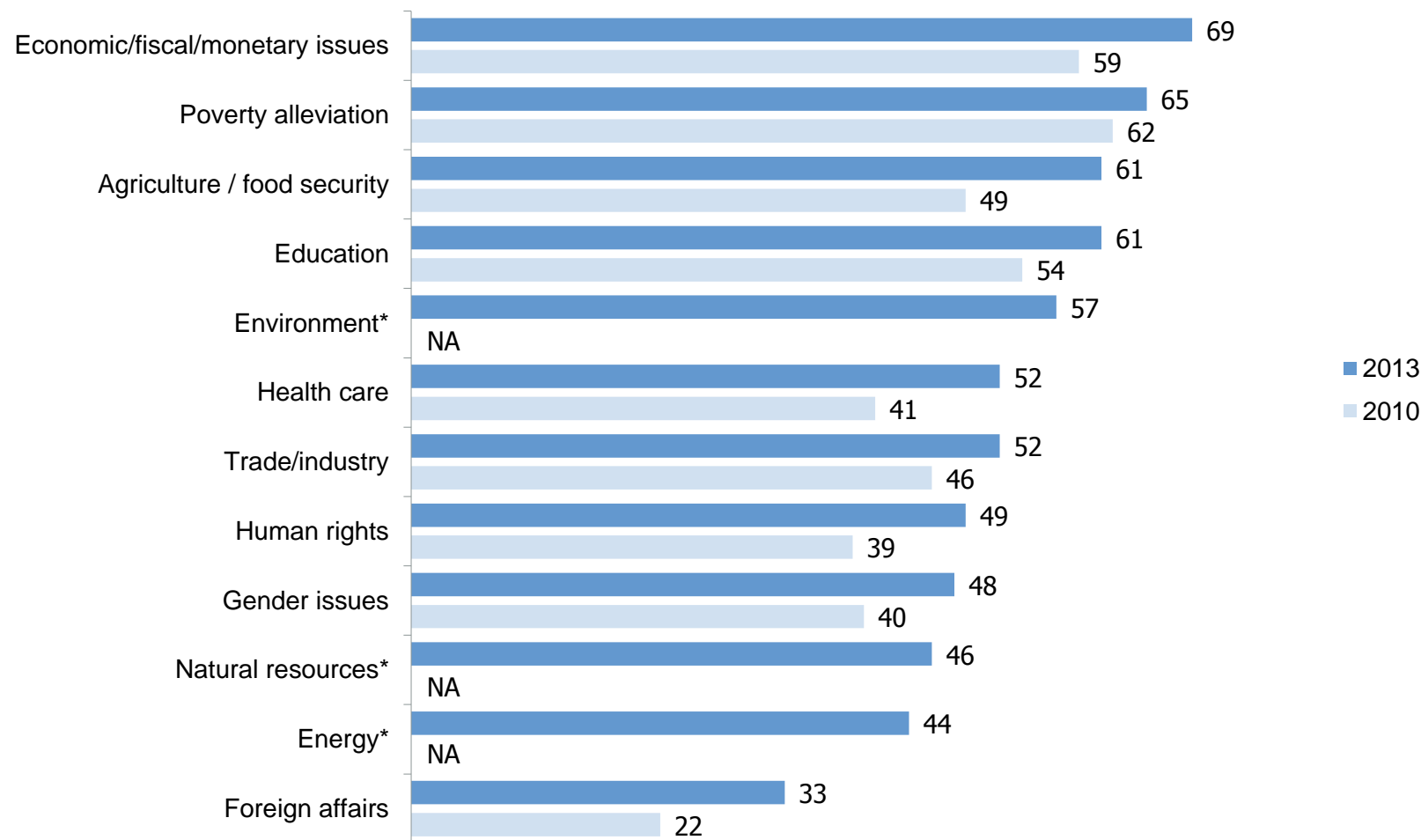
- Elected and non-elected government officials, multilateral organizations and companies within the private sector are most interested in economic information, while the media are most likely to seek education information. NGOs surveyed focus most attention on human rights, while academics/researchers are most likely to look for information on poverty alleviation.
- The variation in topic interests between stakeholder groups suggests that in situations of comprehensive cross-sector policy development, information is required across a variety of themes.

## SLIDE 23 – by country

- In six of the ten participating countries, information about economic issues tops the list of most requested. Exceptions are Benin, where the focus of those surveyed is on poverty alleviation, education and environment; Kenya and Senegal, where poverty alleviation ranks first among stakeholders; and Tanzania, where the focus for those surveyed is on food security. Respondent interest on poverty alleviation information has declined in Ethiopia, Nigeria and Rwanda since 2010. While Ghana, Benin, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda show increased interest across the majority of information types, stakeholders surveyed in Rwanda and Ethiopia demonstrate a decline in interest on a number of information types.

# Types of Information Required for Policy Making








































































Prompted, Africa, 2010–2013



\* “Environment”, “natural resources”, and “energy” were combined in one response option in 2010 (selected by 50% of respondents), but were segmented in 2013.


# Types of Information Required for Policy Making

Prompted, by Stakeholder Type, Africa, 2010–2013

	Overall average 2013		Elected government		Non-elected government		Media		Multilateral/ bilateral		NGO		Private sector		Research/ academia
Economic/fiscal issues	69  		76  		75  		71		83  		50		77  		58
Poverty alleviation	65 		66		61		65		67  		71 		54		69 
Agriculture / food security	61 		54		63  		73 		64  		55		54  		62  
Education	61		63 		51		82  		67  		61		46  		65 
Environment*	57		61		56		73		67 		45		51		53
Health care	52 		68 		44  		67  		52		63		33		44  
Trade/industry	52		68  		46		64  		57  		29		64 		45
Human rights	49 		56		35		76  		55  		74  		26		35
Gender issues	48		54		44  		62  		60  		58		25		42  
Natural resources*	46		51		51		67		48		32		41		40
Energy*	44		41		44		73		40		26		52		34
Foreign affairs	33 		39		31		62  		38  		21		31  		17

 Top mention




























































 Second mention



 Increase of 10% or more from 2010 to 2013


 Decrease of 10% or less from 2010 to 2013

# Types of Information Required for Policy Making

Prompted, by Country, Africa, 2010–2013

	Overall average 2013	Benin	Burkina Faso	Ethiopia	Ghana	Kenya	Nigeria	Rwanda	Senegal	Tanzania	Uganda
Economic/fiscal issues	69 	67	68 	63	89 	58 	76	53	68 	66 	83 
Poverty alleviation	65	74	55	50 	68 	65	63 	40 	80 	68	80 
Agriculture / food security	61 	70 	53	53	51	53	68	35	73 	71 	80 
Education	61	74 	63	38 	68	53	71	53 	59 	63 	73 
Environment*	57	74	43	40	59	53	61	18	75	68	75
Health care	52 	72 	40 	40	68 	48	51	25 	57 	51 	63 
Trade/industry	52	52	45 	53 	68 	45 	49	18 	61 	59 	70 
Human rights	49 	59	40	40	62 	55 	46	35	45 	46	65 
Gender issues	48	61 	33	28 	59 	45	51 	43	50 	44	63 
Natural resources*	46	57	30	38	62	50	41	8	57	49	73
Energy*	44	52	35	30	59	38	51	10	52	46	63
Foreign affairs	33 	43 	28 	15	43 	30	39	8 	36 	37 	45 

 Top mention  
 Second mention

 Increase of 10% or more from 2010 to 2013

 Decrease of 10% or less from 2010 to 2013

## SLIDE 25 – by Africa total

- Thinking of the information required to support policy development, respondents believe that **obtaining information about education, health care, food security, human rights, gender issues and economic issues is the easiest, while obtaining information about energy, foreign affairs, and natural resources is the most difficult.** While the ease of obtaining information has not shifted much for most topics since 2010, respondents do believe that human rights information has become more readily available.

## SLIDE 26 – by stakeholder type

- Elected and non-elected government officials, the media, multilateral organizations and academics surveyed believe obtaining information about education is the easiest, while NGOs believe health care is the most accessible information to support policy development. The private sector find it difficult to find information on most topics. Obtaining information about energy and natural resources is considered to be difficult across all stakeholder types, with the exception of private sector companies reporting natural resources information as the most accessible.
- Non-elected government, private sector companies and the media surveyed report a decline in information availability on certain topics since 2010, while academics, elected government officials, multilateral organizations and NGOs report an increase in information availability.

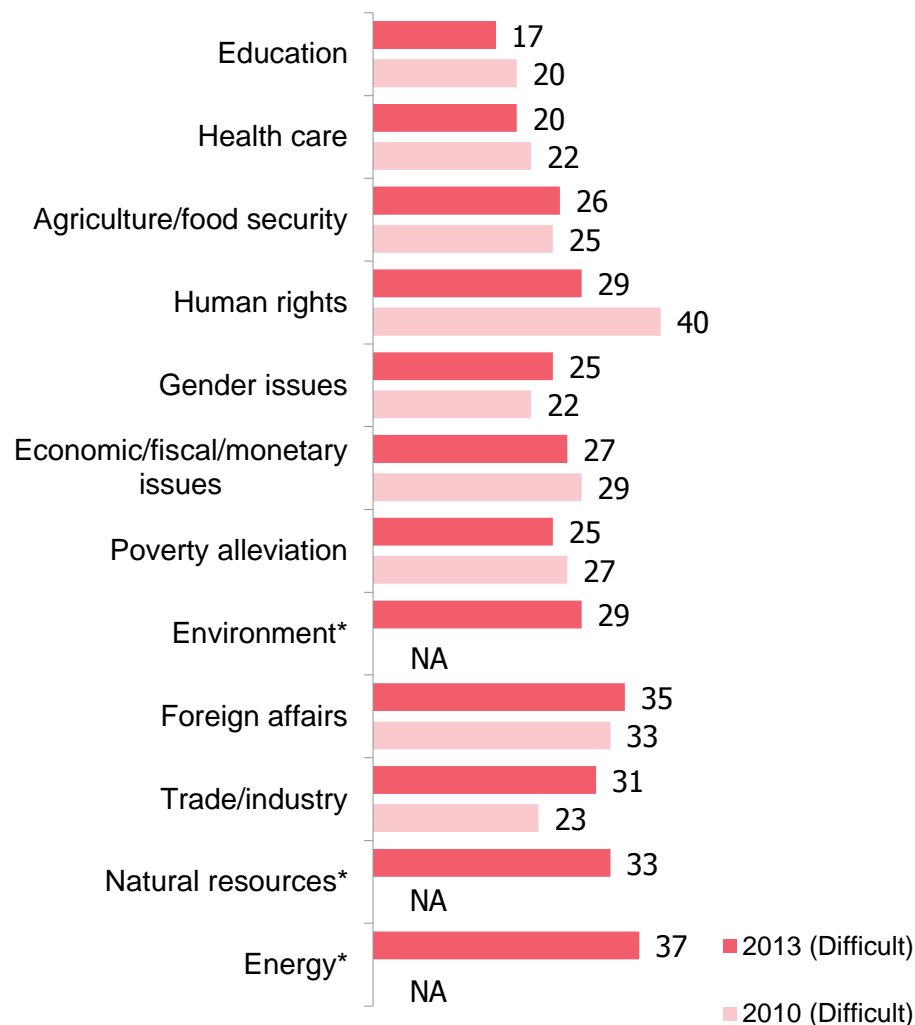
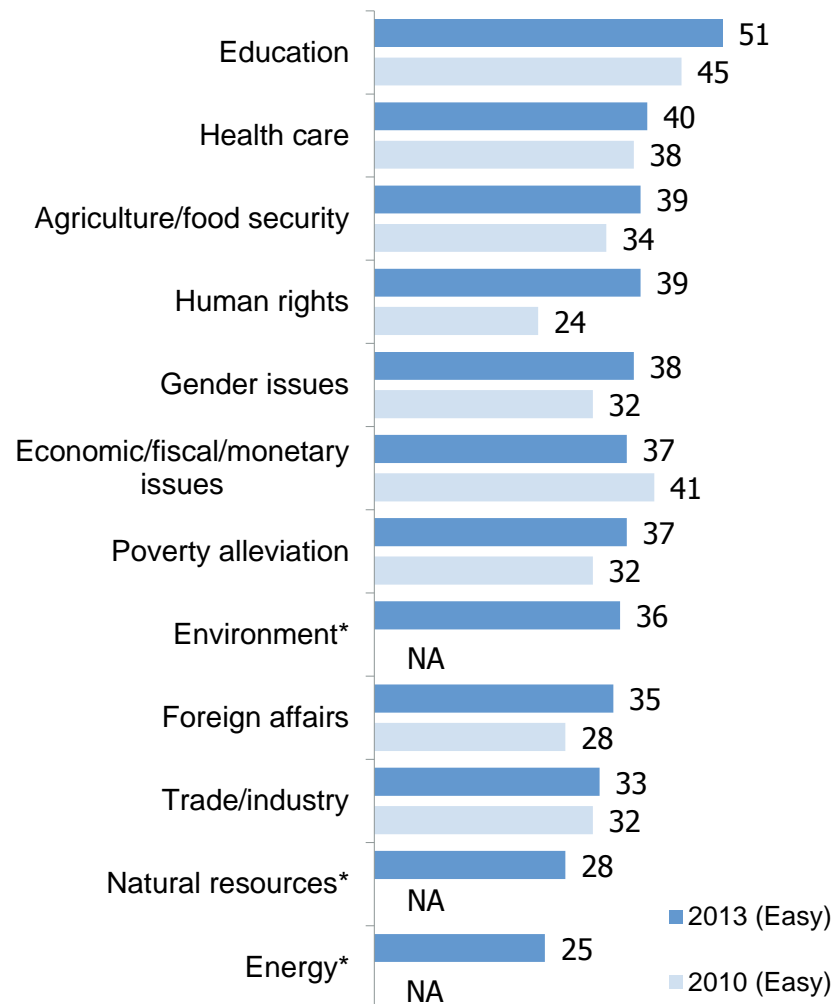
## SLIDE 27 – by country

- The availability of information for policy development differs widely across African countries. However, for respondents in many countries, education is the easiest type of information to obtain while information about energy is the most difficult. Information about human rights appears difficult to obtain in both Ethiopia and Tanzania, while Kenyans surveyed find obtaining information about food security and the environment to be the most difficult and Senegal struggles with gender issues information. Respondents in Benin, Burkina Faso and Uganda are less likely than in 2010 to say access to various types of information is easy, while those in Ghana, Kenya, and Nigeria report more information availability overall.



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

Percent Selecting “Easy” (4+5) and “Difficult” (1+2), Africa, 2010–2013




Subsample: Those who say they require information about this particular issue for their work ( $n=100-279$  in 2010,  $n=133-281$  in 2013)

\* “Environment”, “natural resources”, and “energy” were combined in one response option in 2010 (26% 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, Africa, 2010–2013

	Overall average 2013	Elected government	Non-elected government	Media	Multilateral/ bilateral	NGO	Private sector	Research/ academia
Education	51	69 ▲	50 ▼	42	68 ▲	45	29 ▼	60 ▲
Health care	40	50 ▲	35 ▼	35	55 ▲	49 ▲	30	29 ▼
Agriculture / food security	39	55 ▲	47	35	41 ▲	38 ▲	24	38
Human rights	39 ▲	61 ▲	40	33 ▲	35 ▲	37 ▲	19	44 ▲
Gender issues	38	64 ▲	35	35 ▼	32	33	20 ▼	44 ▲
Economic/fiscal issues	37	42 ▲	40 ▼	26	54	39 ▲	28 ▼	33
Poverty alleviation	37	41	23 ▼	39	57 ▲	34 ▲	24	43 ▲
Environment*	36	40	35	40	36	25	32	41
Foreign affairs	35	31 ▲	50 ▲	29 ▼	50 ▲	15 ▼	26	38 ▲
Trade/industry	33	32	39	29	33	22	28	40 ▲
Natural resources*	28	24	31	30	25	30	40	19
Energy*	25	24	32	20	6	19	38	23

 Easiest

 Most Difficult

▲ Increase of 10% or more from 2010 to 2013

▼ Decrease of 10% or less from 2010 to 2013

Subsample: Those who say they require information about this particular issue for their work ( $n=10-55$  in 2010,  $n=13-53$  in 2013)

\* “Environment”, “natural resources”, and “energy” were combined in one response option in 2010, 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, Africa, 2010–2013

	Overall average 2013	Benin	Burkina Faso	Ethiopia	Ghana	Kenya	Nigeria	Rwanda	Senegal	Tanzania	Uganda
Education	51	38	56	33 ▼	44 ▲	76	59 ▲	71 ▲	35	54	52 ▲
Health care	40	21 ▼	44 ▼	31 ▼	56 ▲	63 ▲	57 ▲	60 ▲	24 ▲	29 ▼	40 ▲
Agriculture / food security	39	28 ▼	43 ▼	24	42 ▲	43	43 ▲	57 ▲	50 ▲	38	31 ▲
Human rights	39 ▲	48 ▲	38 ▲	6	30 ▲	68 ▲	58 ▲	36	20	26	42 ▼
Gender issues	38	46	15 ▼	27	50 ▲	56 ▲	48 ▲	59	14	28 ▼	28 ▼
Economic/fiscal issues	37	16 ▼	26 ▼	12 ▼	45 ▲	74 ▲	55 ▲	52 ▲	27	30 ▼	36 ▼
Poverty alleviation	37	29	18 ▼	20 ▼	28	50 ▲	50 ▲	56 ▲	37 ▲	36 ▲	44 ▼
Environment*	36	21 ▼	41 ▼	19	41 ▲	43	60 ▲	43** ▼	42 ▲	36	23 ▼
Foreign affairs	35	25	36	67** ▲	38 ▲	58 ▲	38 ▲	33**	25	27 ▲	28 ▼
Trade/industry	33	17	22 ▼	10 ▼	32 ▲	72 ▲	50 ▲	57	26	38 ▲	29 ▼
Natural resources*	28	19	33	20	26	45	35	33**	32	30	21
Energy*	25	13	0	17	27	47	24	25**	22	32	36

 Easiest

 Most difficult

▲ Increase of 10% or more from 2010 to 2013

▼ Decrease of 10% or less from 2010 to 2013

Subsample: Those who require information about this particular issue for their work ( $n=3-32$  in 2010,  $n=3-35$  in 2013)

\* “Environment”, “natural resources”, and “energy” were combined in one response option in 2010, but were segmented in 2013.

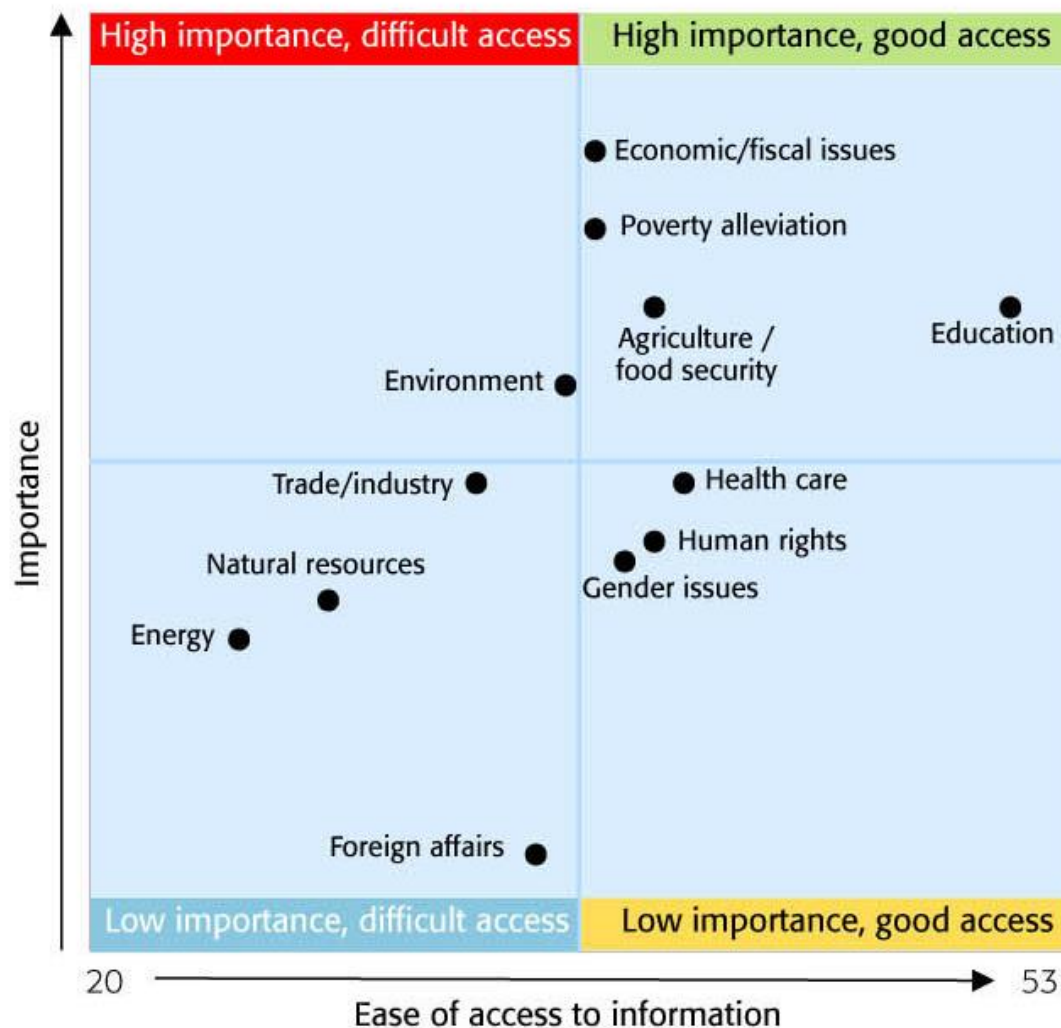
\*\*Small sample sizes for some issues within some stakeholder groups ( $n<10$ )

# Importance vs Ease of Access to Information

Total Mentions vs Respondents Selecting “Easy” (4+5), Africa, 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.



**Policy briefs are used by little over half of respondents to inform their understanding of national policy development, suggesting there is room to broaden readership.**

## **SLIDE 30 – by Africa total**

- Publications and reports are the predominant source of information used to increase respondent understanding of national policy development. This is followed by data bases and data banks, conferences or events, and discussions with colleagues. Policy briefs (targeted analysis of policy), consulting with experts, and information received via the news are considered mid-level sources of information, while newsletters and books are used by less than half of respondents to inform their understanding.

## **SLIDE 31 – by stakeholder type**

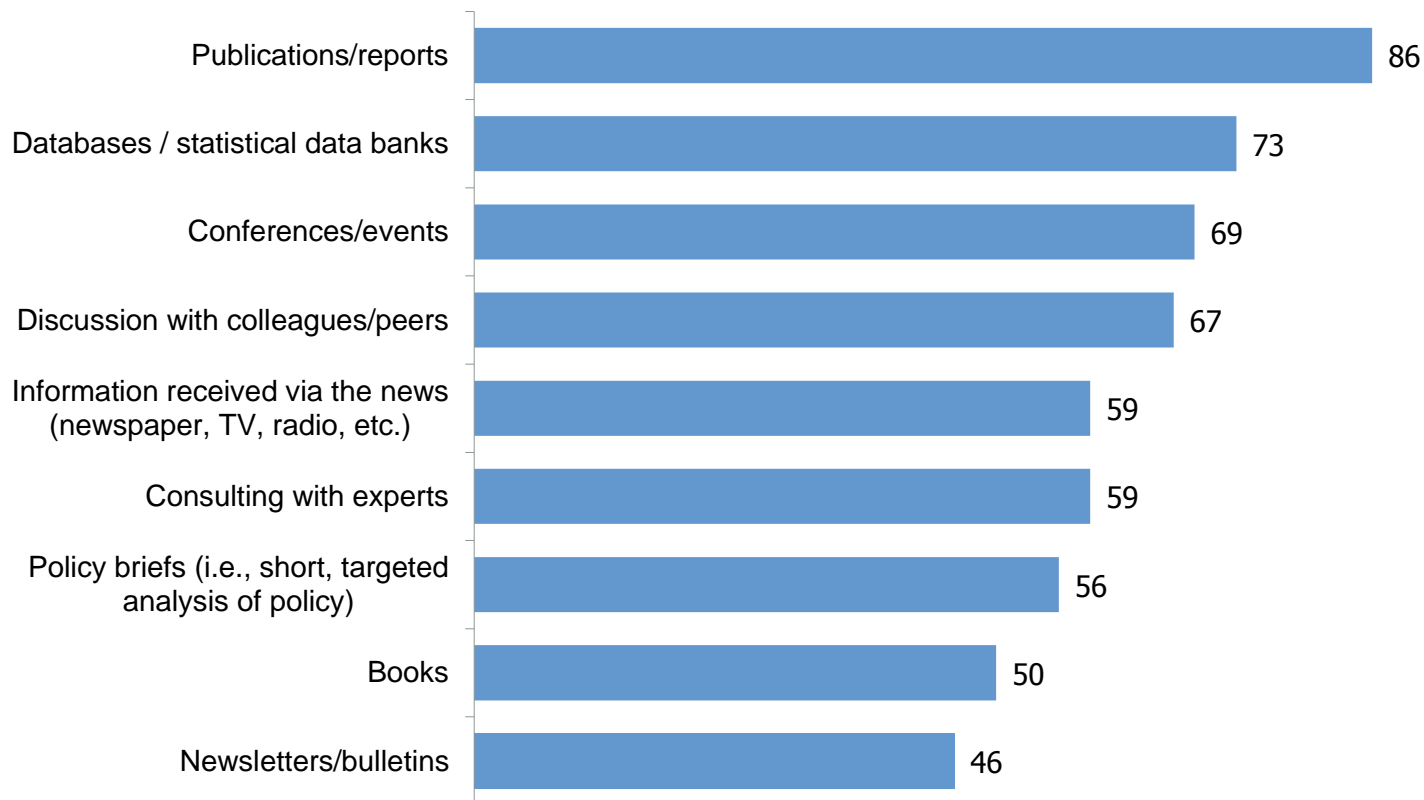
- According to those surveyed, policy briefs are used most often by multilateral organizations, followed by the private sector, academics/researchers, and non-elected government. Less than half of elected government and media surveyed say they use policy briefs to inform their understanding.
- Generally, 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**

- Seven in ten respondents in Tanzania and Uganda refer to policy briefs, compared to over six in ten respondents in Senegal, Ethiopia, and Ghana, and over half in Rwanda and Kenya. Reference to policy briefs is rarer in Benin, Nigeria and Burkina Faso.
- Interestingly, news coverage is a key information source in Ghana, while conferences and events are important in Senegal.

# Information Source Used to Increase Understanding for National Policy Development

Prompted, Africa, 2013



# Information Source Used to Increase Understanding for National Policy Development

Prompted, by Stakeholder Type, Africa, 2013

	Overall average 2013	Elected government	Non-elected government	Media	Multilateral/ bilateral	NGO	Private sector	Research/ academia
Publications/reports	86	88	86	87	83	85	79	91
Databases / statistical data banks	73	68	75	60	76	66	74	84
Conferences/events	69	73	69	80	64	66	64	66
Discussion with colleagues/peers	67	63	69	60	74	68	62	73
Consulting with experts	59	61	61	62	64	61	59	52
Information received via the news (newspaper, TV, radio, etc.)	59	66	56	75	52	66	54	51
Policy briefs (i.e., short, targeted analysis of policy)	56	46	58	47	69	52	59	58
Books	50	49	51	42	45	42	54	60
Newsletters/bulletins	46	34	48	49	40	50	52	44

 Most used

 Least used

# Information Source Used to Increase Understanding for National Policy Development

Prompted, by Country, Africa, 2013

	Overall average 2013	Benin	Burkina Faso	Ethiopia	Ghana	Kenya	Nigeria	Rwanda	Senegal	Tanzania	Uganda
Publications/reports	86	93	75	90	78	85	71	93	84	100	88
Databases / statistical data banks	73	74	78	70	76	78	76	68	82	54	73
Conferences/events	69	65	58	65	76	75	54	60	84	73	78
Discussion with colleagues/peers	67	74	65	60	78	83	34	60	73	63	83
Information received via the news (newspaper, TV, radio, etc.)	59	65	58	63	86	58	39	33	59	76	60
Consulting with experts	59	46	33	45	76	80	49	70	66	68	65
Policy briefs (i.e., short, targeted analysis of policy)	56	30	48	65	62	53	39	58	66	71	70
Books	50	59	40	38	41	45	39	43	59	76	55
Newsletters/bulletins	46	52	33	43	59	55	49	25	59	34	53

 Most used

 Least used



# Most Useful Format for Receiving Information for National Policy Development

**In Africa, websites are seen as the best way to share information relating to national policy development. Social media and blogging have almost no traction.**

## **SLIDE 34 – by Africa total**

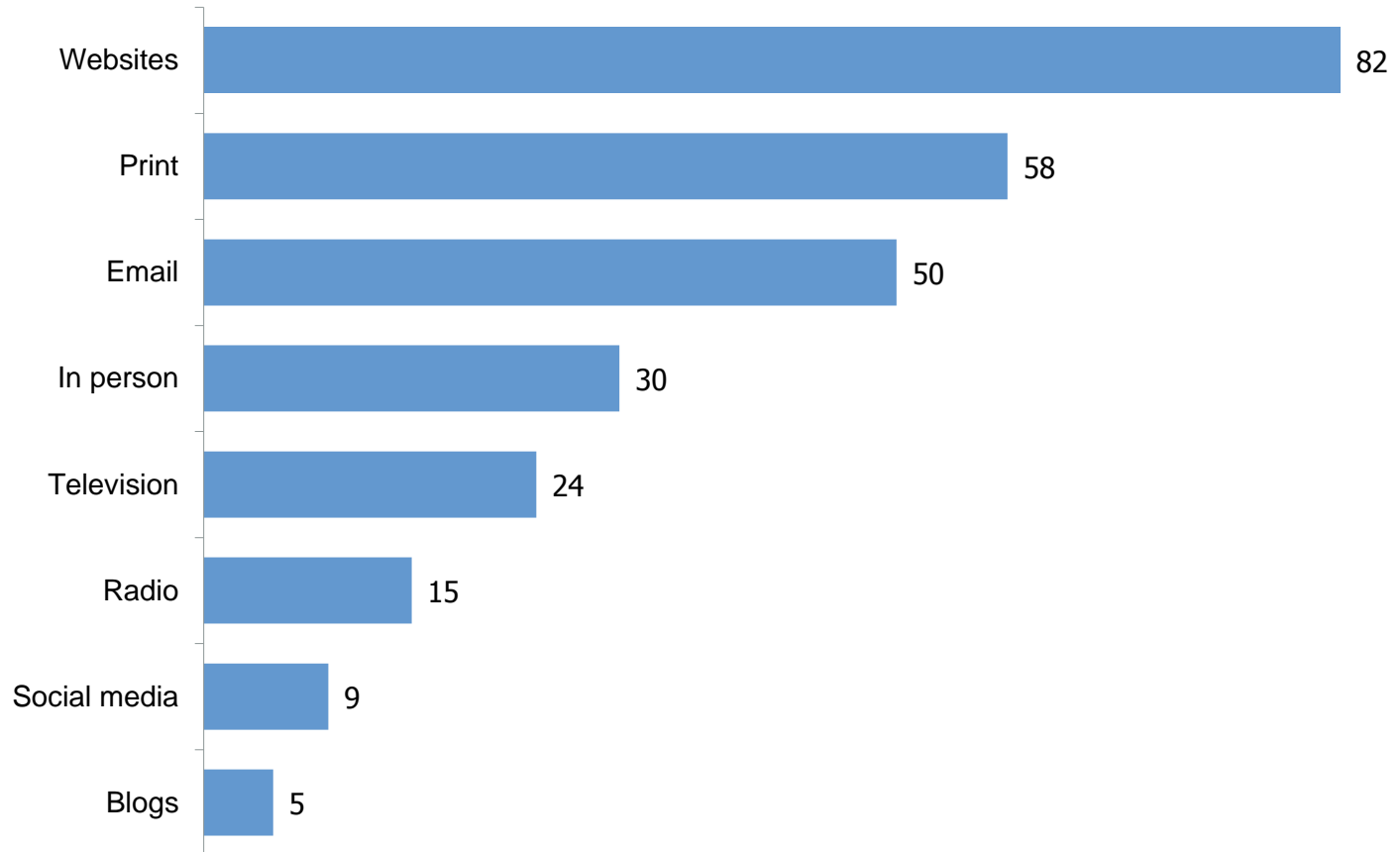
- When asked what format they find most useful for receiving information for national policy development, eight in ten respondents point to websites, well ahead of any other channel suggested. Print is selected by six in ten respondents, while half see email as most useful. One-third would prefer in person, while one-quarter look to television as a good medium. Only small numbers of people select radio, social media 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.
- Websites are seen as most useful across all countries, except in Tanzania and Ethiopia where print has a slight edge over the web. Television receives more mentions in Nigeria and Burkina Faso than elsewhere. Ugandans and Senegalese are most interested than others in face-to-face meetings.

# Most Useful Format for Receiving Information for National Policy Development

Prompted, Could Select Up to Three Responses, Africa, 2013




# Most Useful Format for Receiving Information for National Policy Development

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

	Overall average 2013	Elected government	Non-elected government	Media	Multilateral/ bilateral	NGO	Private sector	Research/ academia
Websites	82	73	86	65	83	81	85	91
Print	58	54	59	55	64	65	46	61
Email	50	56	46	49	52	42	56	51
In person (face to face or telephone)	30	29	27	35	40	29	30	25
Television	24	37	30	25	5	21	20	27
Radio	15	24	14	33	5	18	10	8
Social Media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter)	9	2	6	13	10	18	8	8
Blogs	5	2	3	7	10	5	3	8

 Most useful


 Least useful

# Most Useful Format for Receiving Information for National Policy Development

Prompted, Could Select Up to Three Responses,  
by Country, Africa, 2013

	Overall average 2013	Benin	Burkina Faso	Ethiopia	Ghana	Kenya	Nigeria	Rwanda	Senegal	Tanzania	Uganda
Websites	82	91	88	68	84	88	78	80	91	83	65
Print	58	72	60	73	65	70	27	50	27	88	48
Email	50	61	48	38	49	58	39	38	57	63	48
In person (face to face or telephone)	30	22	33	28	22	25	20	35	52	15	48
Television	24	22	38	23	27	13	56	13	18	15	18
Radio	15	7	8	20	41	3	24	25	14	7	10
Social Media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter)	9	15	5	13	3	8	17	10	7	10	5
Blogs	5	9	0	0	0	13	15	10	0	7	0

 Most useful

 Least useful

**IDRC**

International Development  
Research Centre



**CRDI**

Centre de recherches pour le  
développement international

# **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 independent think tanks has increased slightly since 2010 in Africa, but there is room for further development.**

## **SLIDE 39 – By Africa total**

- As in 2010, over half of all respondents turn to relevant government ministries and agencies when they require research-based evidence related to social and economic policies. This is closely followed by government-owned research institutes (where mentions are up significantly from 2010) and international agencies (which are down from 2010). Think tanks rank fourth (national) and sixth (international) overall.
- Respondents are more likely to look to national independent policy research institutes than international ones when looking for information (42% vs 35%), and the use of these national think tanks has increased slightly since 2010.

## **SLIDE 40 – By stakeholder type**

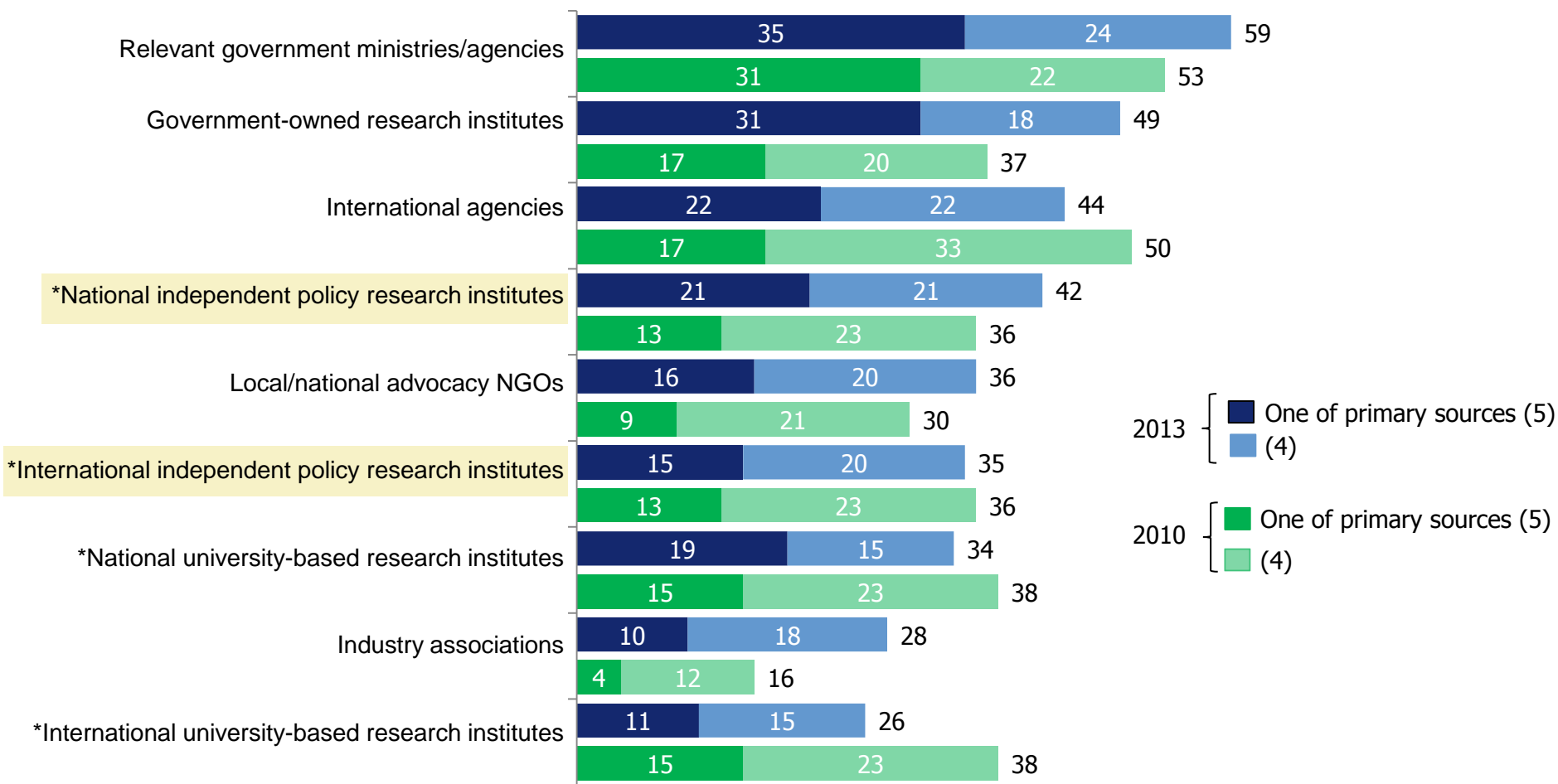
- Government ministries and agencies are the primary source for most stakeholder audiences, except for academics and researchers.
- According to those surveyed, international think tanks are the primary source of information for academics and researchers, but are not a strong source of information for others. Aside from research/academia, international think tanks are utilized less than national research institutes by stakeholders. National think tanks are more likely to be used by research/academia and media.

## **SLIDE 41 – By country**

- Across all ten countries, stakeholder respondents in Benin and Burkina Faso rely least on national think tanks for their information needs, while well over half of those in Ghana, Tanzania, and Uganda rely on them. Less than two in ten in Burkina Faso and Kenya, and three in ten in Uganda, rely on international think tanks for information.
- While government ministries receive the top rating in nearly all countries as a primary source of information, respondents in Nigeria and Rwanda favour government-owned research institutes over relevant ministries.

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

Percent of Respondents Selecting “Primary Source” (4+5), Africa, 2010–2013





\*Independent policy research institute” and “University-based research institute” were included as response options in 2010, but were segmented further into “National” and “International “ options in the 2013 survey. The 2010 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, Africa, 2010–2013

	Overall average 2013		Elected government		Non-elected government		Media		Multilateral/ bilateral		NGO		Private sector		Research/ academia	
Relevant government ministries/agencies	59		73	▲	75		53		60	▲	56		52		51	
Government-owned research institutes	49	▲	46		72	▲	49	▲	36		48	▲	38	▲	47	
International agencies	44		32		37	▼	40	▼	55	▼	47	▼	43		51	
→ National independent policy research institutes*	42		39		39		45		40		40		34		51	
Local/national advocacy NGOs	36		39	▲	28		45		29		52		31	▲	29	
→ International independent policy research institutes*	35		29		30		27		33		35		28		56	
National university-based research institutes*	35		34		39		36		24		29		20		52	
Industry associations	27	▲	32	▲	25	▲	31		21	▲	18		39	▲	26	▲
International university-based research institutes*	25		15		20		24		21		23		18		48	

 Organization used most often

 Organization used least often

▲ Increase of 10% or more from 2010 to 2013


▼ Decrease of 10% or less from 2010 to 2013





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

Percent of Respondents Selecting “Primary Source” (4+5),  
by Country, Africa, 2010–2013

	Overall average 2013	Benin	Burkina Faso	Ethiopia	Ghana	Kenya	Nigeria	Rwanda	Senegal	Tanzania	Uganda
Relevant government ministries/agencies	59	50	73	65	70	60	39	53	55	66	68
Government-owned research institutes	49	46	23	48	46	48	49	73	41	63	58
International agencies	44	48	33	53	46	25	44	38	45	49	55
National independent policy research institutes*	42	30	13	45	65	48	29	33	41	59	60
Local/national advocacy NGOs	36	33	33	20	49	30	24	35	34	51	50
International independent policy research institutes*	35	37	20	38	41	18	41	40	45	44	28
National university-based research institutes*	35	33	10	33	41	28	29	40	25	66	45
Industry associations	27	30	25	30	35	20	20	28	34	39	13
International university-based research institutes*	25	33	10	25	30	18	37	18	18	39	28

 Organization used most often

 Organization used least often

 Increase of 10% or more from 2010 to 2013

 Decrease of 10% or less from 2010 to 2013

# 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 think tanks because of the relevance of the research to their needs; they turn to international think tanks because of the high quality of their work. Amongst our sample of stakeholders, a lack of familiarity is the most common reason for not using think tanks.**

## **SLIDE 43 – By Africa total**

- Similar to 2010, when stakeholders were asked why they turn to specific organizations for their information needs, almost all mention the relevance of the research to their needs and quality of research as their top two reasons.
- National think tanks are chosen more for the relevance of their research whereas international think tanks are chosen more for the quality of their work. Between national and international university-based research institutes the difference is less pronounced, however, international organizations as a whole are more likely to be chosen for their high quality of research.
- Government-owned research institutes, government ministries, local/national NGOs and industry associations are chosen far more for the relevance of their research needs than quality of output.
- Personal contact and the fact that it is the only organization available are reasons more commonly cited with regards to government ministries and industry associations than with other organizations.

## **SLIDE 44 – By Africa total**

- As in 2010, lack of familiarity is the most common reason for a respondent not turning to national independent research institutes. Quality not meeting their needs and their needs being met through other sources are also factors, but to a lesser degree.

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

By Organization Type, Africa, 2010–2013

	Overall average 2013		Government-owned research institutes (n=110)		National university-based research institutes (n=70)		International university-based research institutes (n=40)		National independent policy research institutes (n=79)		International independent policy research institutes (n=53)		Relevant government ministries/agencies (n=130)		International agencies (n=79)		Local/national advocacy NGOs (n=58)		Industry associations (n=31)	
Relevance of research to needs	38		47	▲	33		35		45		20		45		36		45		38	▲
High quality of research	28	▲	13		35		47		28		52		12		34	▲	15		15	
High quality of staff/researchers	13		13		18		14		16		18		6		13		11		10	
Only type of organization that is familiar	7		10		4		2		6		2		7		8		12	▲	8	
Personal Contact	6		6		5		0		0		3		15	▲	2		8		10	
Only type of organization available	5		7		3		2		1		2		11		3		6		13	

Top mention

Second mention

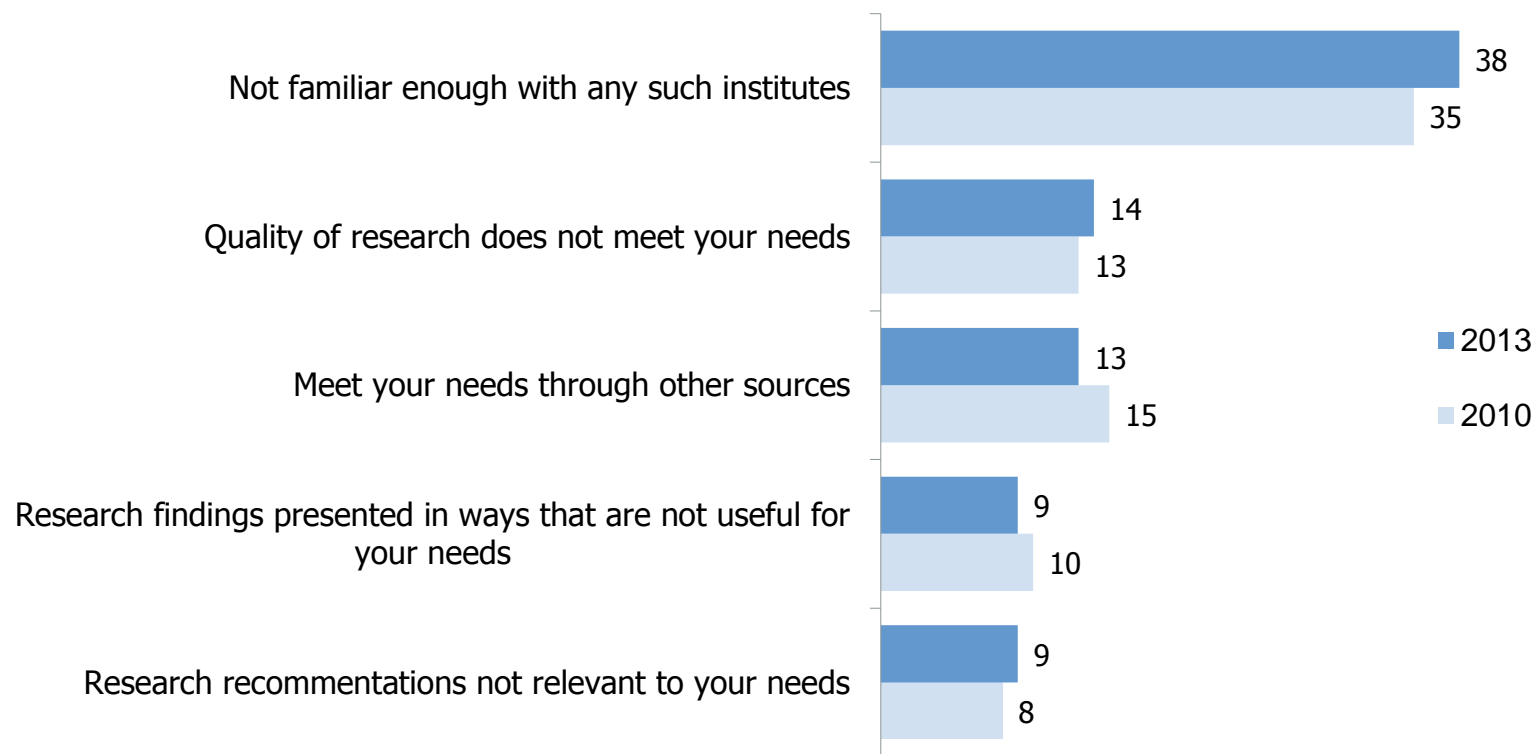
▲ Increase of 10% or more from 2010 to 2013

▼ Decrease of 10% or less from 2010 to 2013

Subsample: Those who say they use type of institute as a primary source of policy information (5 on 5-point scale) (n=19-140 in 2010, n= 39-143 in 2013)

# Reasons for Not Turning to National Think Tanks for Research-Based Evidence

Prompted, Africa, 2013



Subsample: Those who have never used national independent policy research institutes when looking for research-based evidence ( $n=56$  for 2013)

Single mentions and "don't know" not included in the chart

# 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 rank close behind, rated best of all “in-country” sources of information.**

## **SLIDE 47 – By Africa total**

- International think tanks are rated highest in quality according to respondents, followed by international agencies and international university-based research institutes. National think tanks are not far behind and are rated highest among local/national organizations.
- Ratings of the perceived quality of government-owned research institutes, industry associations, and local/national NGOs have increased significantly since 2010.

## **SLIDE 48 – By stakeholder type**

- According to those surveyed, international think tanks receive top rankings for quality from academics/researchers, elected government, the private sector, and multilaterals/bilaterals.
- Non-elected government stakeholders who were surveyed give their highest quality ratings to government agencies and international agencies, while respondents from NGOs favour national and international university-based research institutes.
- Surveyed media are less likely than others to give their highest quality ranking to think tanks, ranking international agencies and university-based research institutes ahead on quality.
- NGOs and those surveyed in research/academia give higher quality ratings than other stakeholders to national think tanks.

## **SLIDE 49 – By country**

- The perceived quality ratings of national think tanks are highest among respondents in Ghana and Tanzania. Ratings were lower in Burkina Faso and Rwanda (although still ahead of other organizations).
- International think tanks receive better ratings for quality than any other organization in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Senegal, and Tanzania; they rank second in Benin and Rwanda.
- Stakeholders in Uganda and Kenya give their top quality rating to international agencies.

## **SLIDE 50 – By stakeholder type**

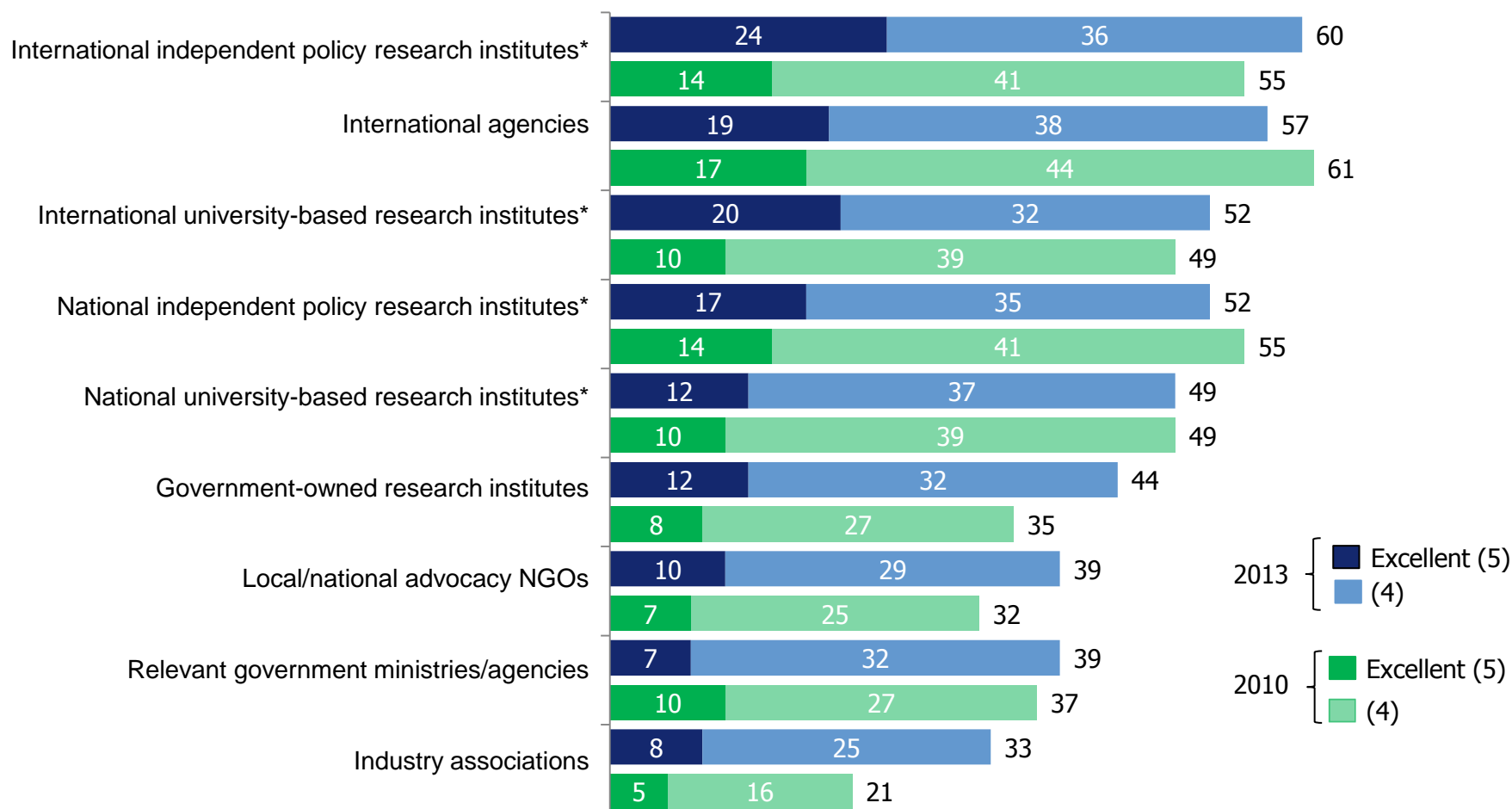
- International think tanks tend to receive better quality ratings than national think tanks from most stakeholders. NGOs and media are the exception, with surveyed NGOs tending to prefer national over international and media not distinguishing between the two.
- Think tank quality ratings have improved since 2010, except among media and NGO respondents where ratings have declined among the sample.

## **SLIDE 51 – By country**

- Across all countries, respondents in Ghana and Kenya rate national think tanks higher in quality than international think tanks. Stakeholders in Ethiopia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Benin, and Burkina Faso rate international think tanks far higher than national think tanks. Those in Tanzania, Senegal and Uganda do not differentiate much between the two.

# Quality Ratings of Research Provided by...

Africa, 2010–2013



Subsample: Those who use each type of organization (n=263–384 in 2010, n=273–380 in 2013)

"Independent policy research institute" and "University-based research institute" were included as response options in 2010, but were segmented further into "International" and "National" options in the 2013 survey. The 2010 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, Africa, 2010–2013

	Overall average 2013	Elected government	Non-elected government	Media	Multilateral/ bilateral	NGO	Private sector	Research/ academia
International independent policy research institutes*	60	68	55	45	64	48	66	71
National independent policy research institutes*	52	55	49	44	41	58	51	58
International agencies	57	56	63 ▲	60 ▼	62 ▼	52 ▼	58	54
International university- based research institutes*	52	41	38	50	61	61	45	63
National university-based research institutes*	49	59	51	47	39	60	31	54
Government-owned research institutes	44 ▲	58 ▲	55	36 ▲	43 ▲	37 ▲	34 ▼	43 ▲
Relevant government ministries/agencies	39	59 ▲	64 ▲	27	25	38	27 ▼	32
Local/national advocacy NGOs	39	57 ▲	29	42	46 ▲	56	25	28
Industry associations	33 ▲	45 ▲	23	32	44 ▲	39 ▲	36 ▲	27 ▲



Top rating



Second rating



Increase of 10% or more from 2010 to 2013



Decrease of 10% or less from 2010 to 2013

Subsample: Those who use each type of organization (Total for 2010  $n=18-93$ , total for 2013  $n=22-73$ )



\*“Independent policy research institute” and “University-based research institute” were included as response options in 2010, but were segmented further into “International” and “National” options in the 2013 survey.



# Quality Ratings of Research Provided by...

Percent of Respondents Selecting “Excellent” (4+5),  
by Country, Africa, 2010–2013

	Overall average 2013	Benin	Burkina Faso	Ethiopia	Ghana	Kenya	Nigeria	Rwanda	Senegal	Tanzania	Uganda
International independent policy research institutes*	60	54	48	73	64	44	71	62	56	70	50
National independent policy research institutes*	52	43	33	53	71	56	43	40	54	67	50
International university-based research institutes*	52	48	28	59	66	60	57	48	41	61	44
International agencies	58	61 ▼	42 ▼	64 ▲	63	61	58 ▼	47 ▼	50 ▼	63 ▲	68
National university-based research institutes*	49	44	22	40	70	43	43	61	47	67	39
Government-owned research institutes	44	28	26 ▼	21 ▼	38	60 ▲	42	64 ▲	38	56 ▲	59 ▲
Relevant government ministries/agencies	39	38	35	22 ▼	32	42	41	38 ▼	40	59 ▲	44 ▲
Local/national advocacy NGOs	39	32	39	38 ▲	50 ▲	48 ▲	38 ▼	35 ▲	43	47 ▲	19 ▼
Industry associations	33 ▲	43 ▲	29	25	38 ▲	30	35 ▲	32	26	45 ▲	18

 Top rating  
 Second rating

▲ Increase of 10% or more from 2010 to 2013

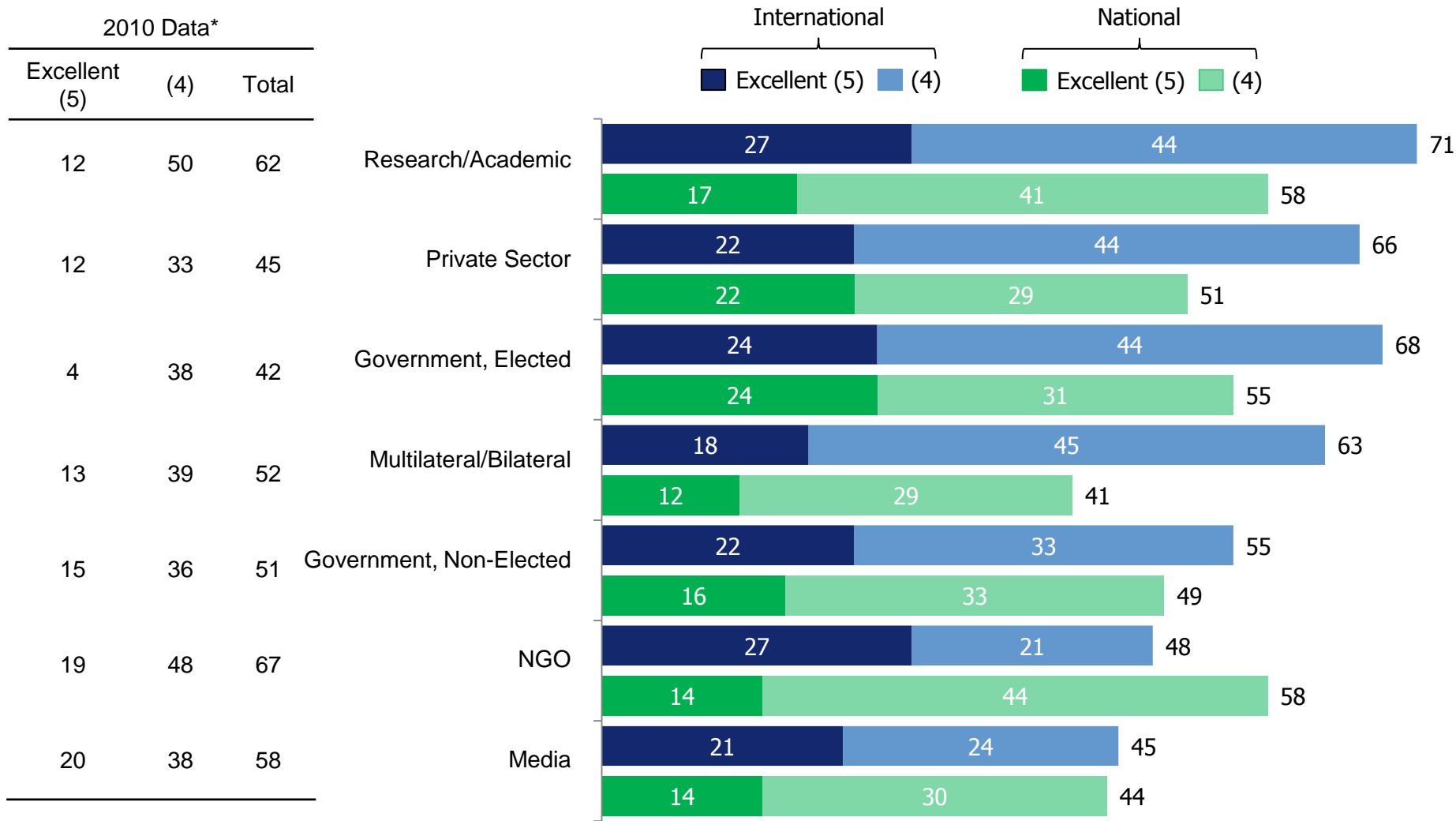
▼ Decrease of 10% or less from 2010 to 2013

Subsample: Those who use each type of organization (Total for 2010  $n=10-45$ , total for 2013  $n=16-42$ )

\*“Independent policy research institute” and “University-based research institute” were included as response options in 2010, but were segmented further into “International” and “National” options in the 2013 survey.

# Quality Ratings of Research Provided by Think Tanks

By Stakeholder Type, Africa, 2010–2013



Subsample: Respondents who use Independent policy research institutes ( $n=24-90$  in 2010,  $n=25-84$  in 2013)

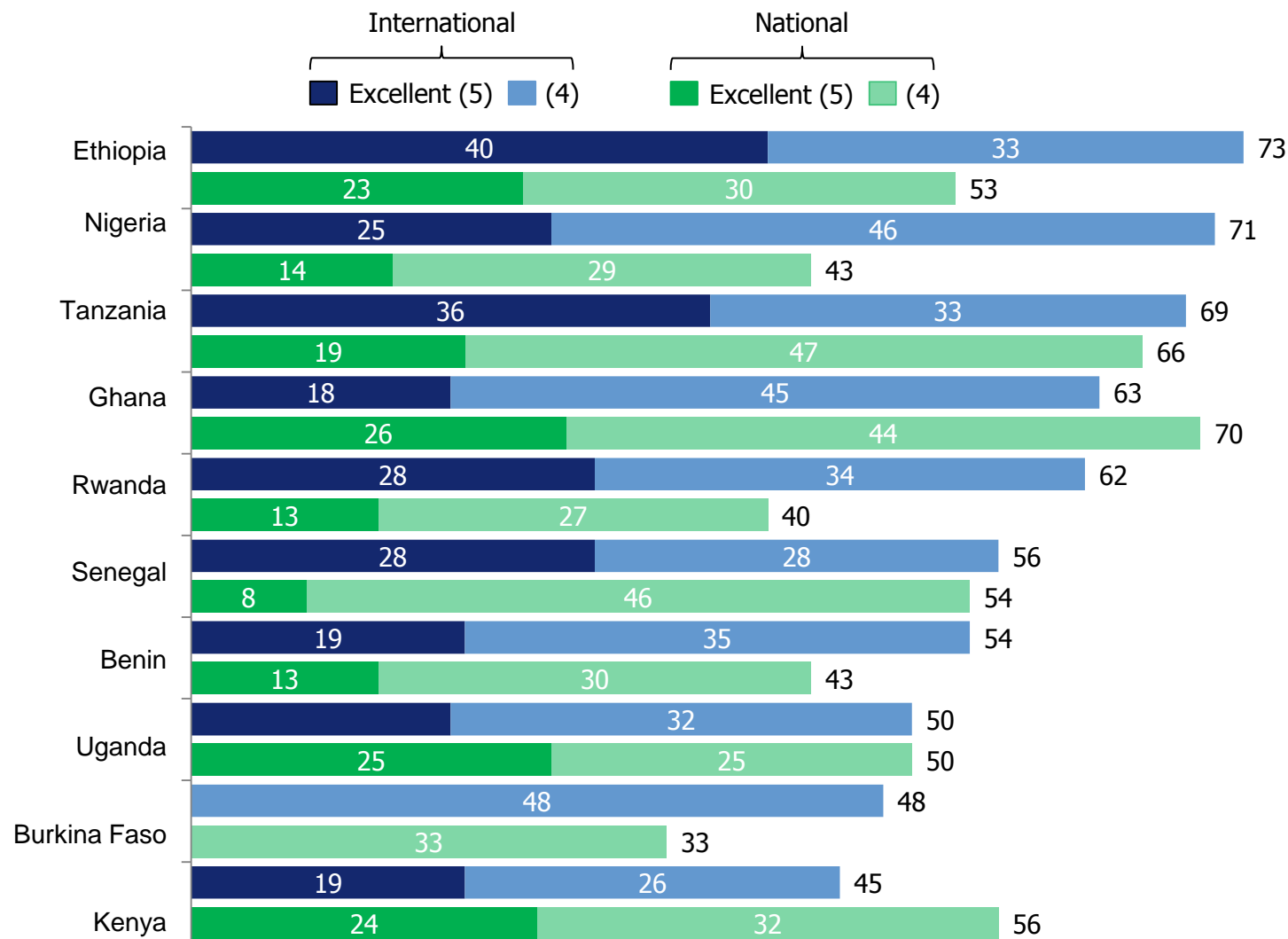
\*“Independent policy research institute” was included as response options in 2010, but was further segmented into “International” and “National” options on the 2013 survey. For comparison purposes, the 2010 data are shown on the left.

# Quality Ratings of Research Provided by Think Tanks

## By Country, Africa, 2010–2013

2010 Data\*

Excellent (5)	(4)	Total
7	57	64
17	44	61
19	39	58
14	49	63
7	36	43
13	35	48
19	31	50
3	41	44
11	22	33
28	49	77



Subsample: Respondents who use Independent policy research institutes (2010  $n=23-39$ ; 2013  $n=26-37$ )

\*"Independent policy research institute" was included as response options in 2010, but was further segmented into "International" and "National" options on the 2013 survey. For comparison purposes, the 2010 data are shown on the left.

**Respondents who are more likely to see think tanks as providing high quality research are more likely to use them as a source of information.**

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

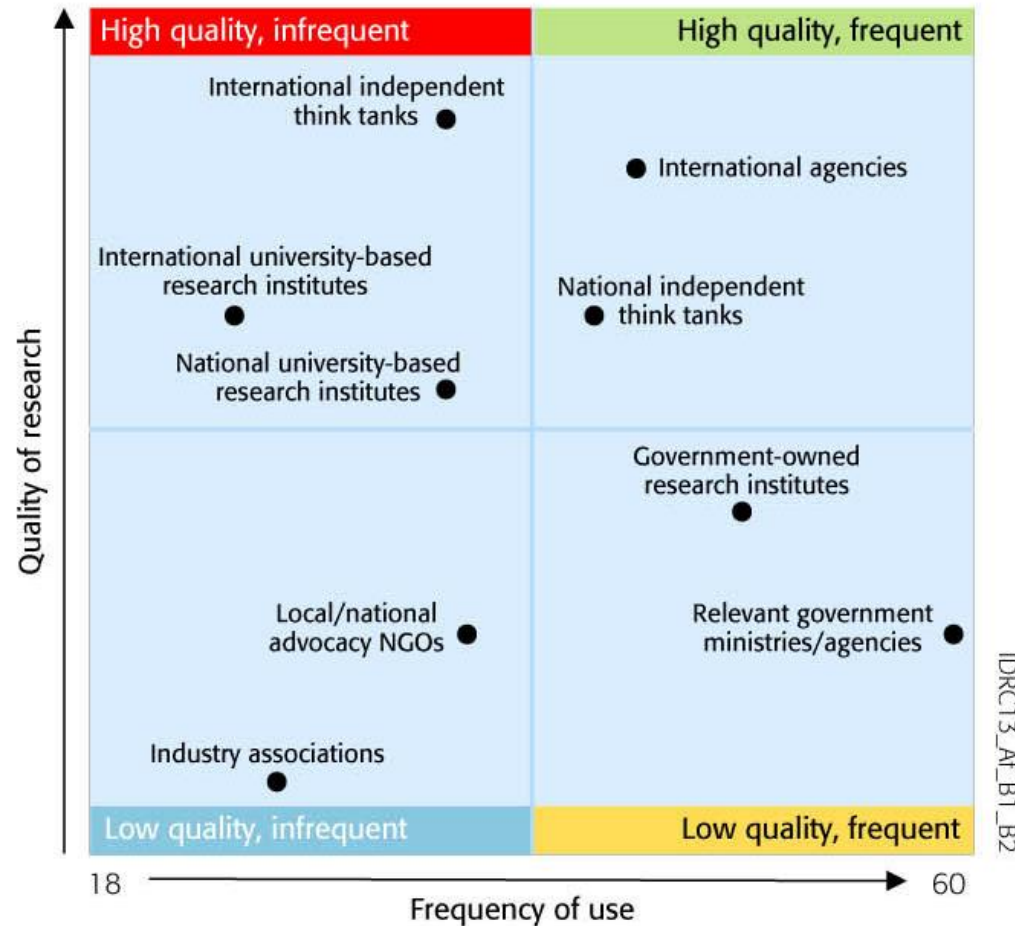
- Although relevant government ministries/agencies and government-owned research institutes are used most frequently by the survey sample, their research quality rating is among the lowest.
- National think tanks and international agencies are used by respondents almost as often as government organizations, but their quality is perceived to be much higher.
- While the quality of international think tanks and university-based research institutes is thought to be high, these are used less frequently than other sources. Familiarity and accessibility may be an issue.
- NGOs and industry associations are used less and their quality is perceived as lower than that of other organizations.

## **SLIDE 54 – national vs international think tanks**

- National think tanks have a good profile among stakeholders surveyed in Ghana, Tanzania, Kenya and Ethiopia – they are seen to provide high quality research and are used relatively frequently by stakeholders. Accessibility seems to be an issue among respondents in Senegal, where quality is seen as high, but use is less frequent. Profiles need to be improved among stakeholders in Benin, Nigeria, Rwanda and Burkina Faso, where quality is less well perceived than elsewhere and use is less frequent. Perceptions of quality are lower in Uganda.
- International think tanks have a good profile in Ethiopia, Nigeria, Tanzania, Ghana and Rwanda, as they are used frequently by respondents and seen as good quality. Use is frequent in Senegal and Benin, although there are lower quality ratings here. Quality perceptions and accessibility need to be improved in Uganda, Burkina Faso, and Kenya.

# Quality of Research vs Frequency of Use

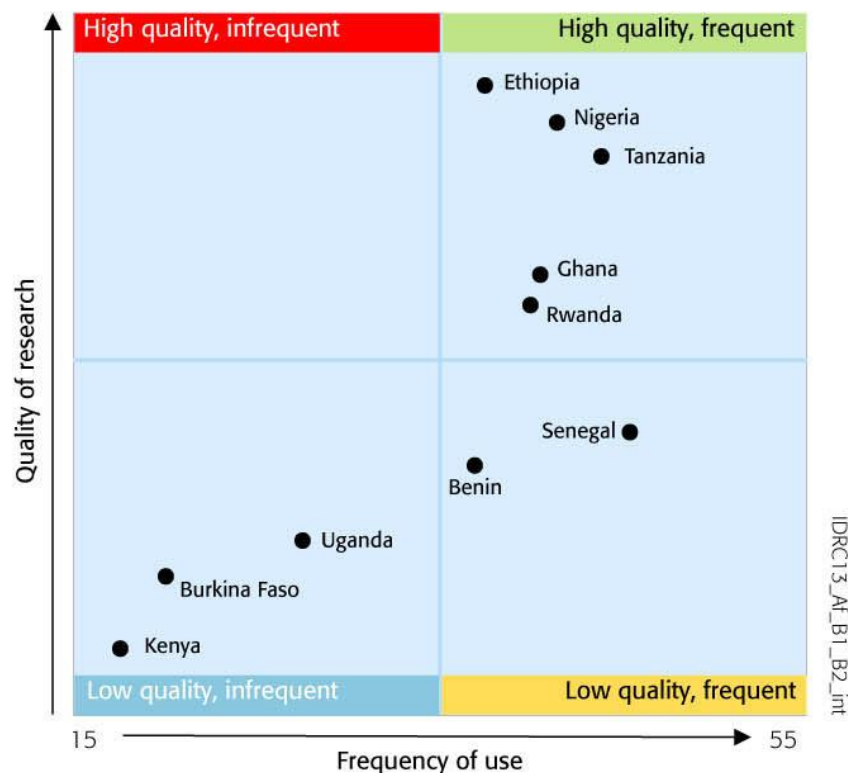
Percent of Respondents Selecting “Excellent” (4+5) vs “Primary Source” (4+5), Africa, 2013



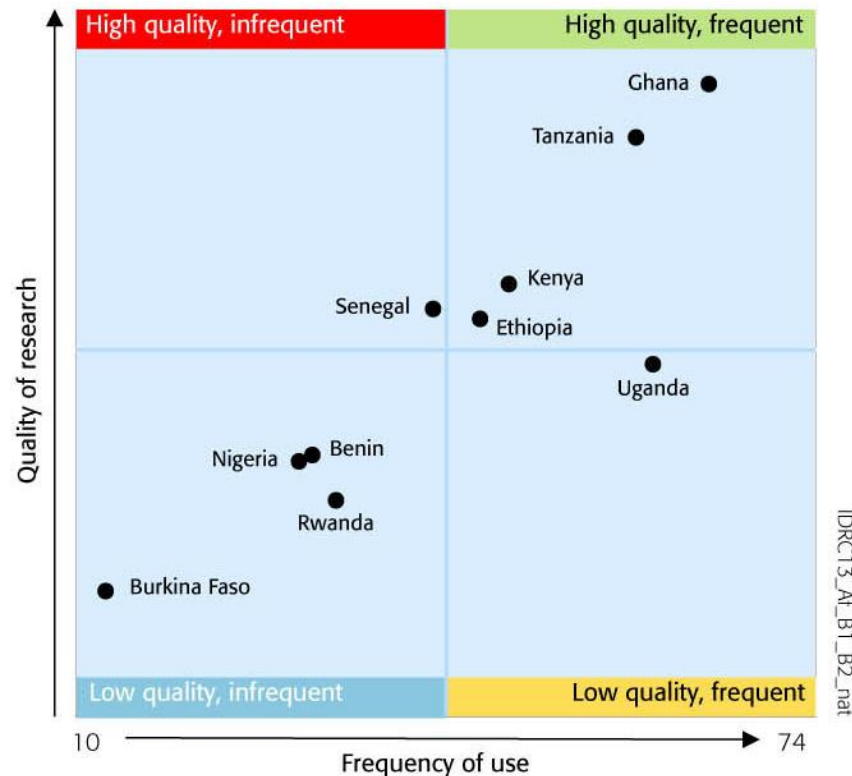
# Quality vs Frequency of Use of Research Provided by Think Tanks

Percent of Respondents Selecting “Excellent” (4+5) vs “Primary Source” (4+5), by Country, 2010–2013

**International Independent Think Tanks**



**National Independent Think Tanks**



**IDRC**

International Development  
Research Centre



**CRDI**

Centre de recherches pour le  
développement international

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

**Familiarity with think tanks has improved since 2010 in half of the participating African countries. Word-of-mouth, staff engagement, and media exposure are most effective in bolstering familiarity.**

## **SLIDE 57 – Familiarity, by country**

- In half of the African countries, there has been an increase since 2010 in familiarity with the think tanks rated. Familiarity has increased substantially among respondents in Ghana, Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda, with a slight increase in Kenya. Interestingly, it is generally the number of people saying they are now “very familiar” that has increased significantly from three years ago.
- In Senegal and Benin, we see a decline in think tank familiarity, although the levels of those saying they are “very familiar” have remained constant. There has been no significant change in familiarity in Ethiopia, Burkina Faso and Nigeria since 2010.
- Note that in Rwanda, Senegal and Nigeria, over 40 percent of respondents say they are unfamiliar with the think tanks tested.

## **SLIDE 58 – Length of engagement, by country**

- In Benin, Rwanda, Nigeria and Senegal, the majority of respondents have known regional think tanks for 5 years or less. In other countries, the relationship is longer term, particularly in Burkina Faso, Kenya, Ghana, and Uganda, where many respondents say they have been familiar with the work of the think tanks for 10 years or more.

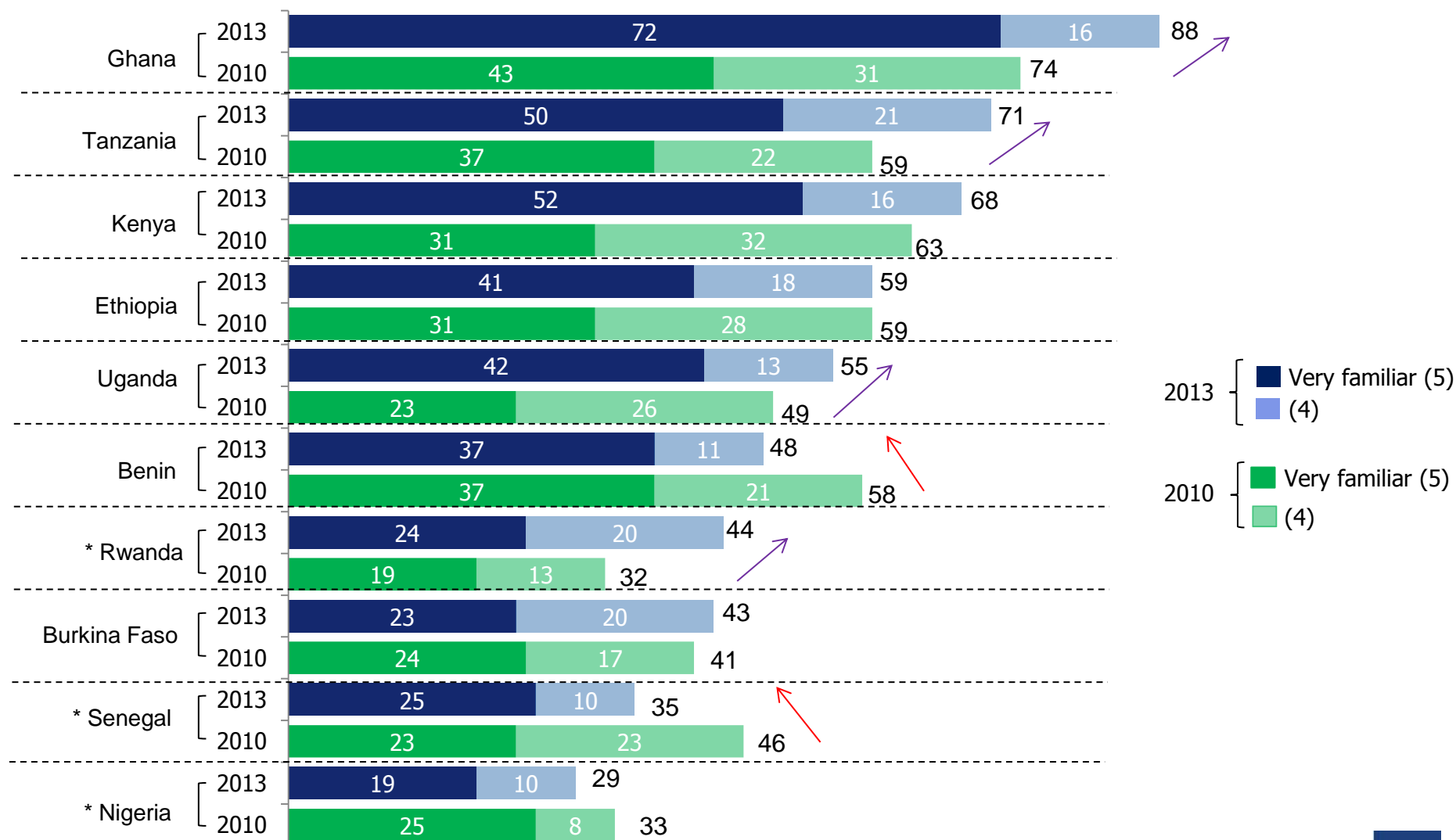
## **SLIDE 59 – Interaction, by Africa total**

- 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 or use its website more than a couple of times a year. Over half say they have received reports, publications or correspondence at least a few times a year, and four in ten 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, Africa, 2010–2013



# Number of Years Familiar with Think Tank's Work

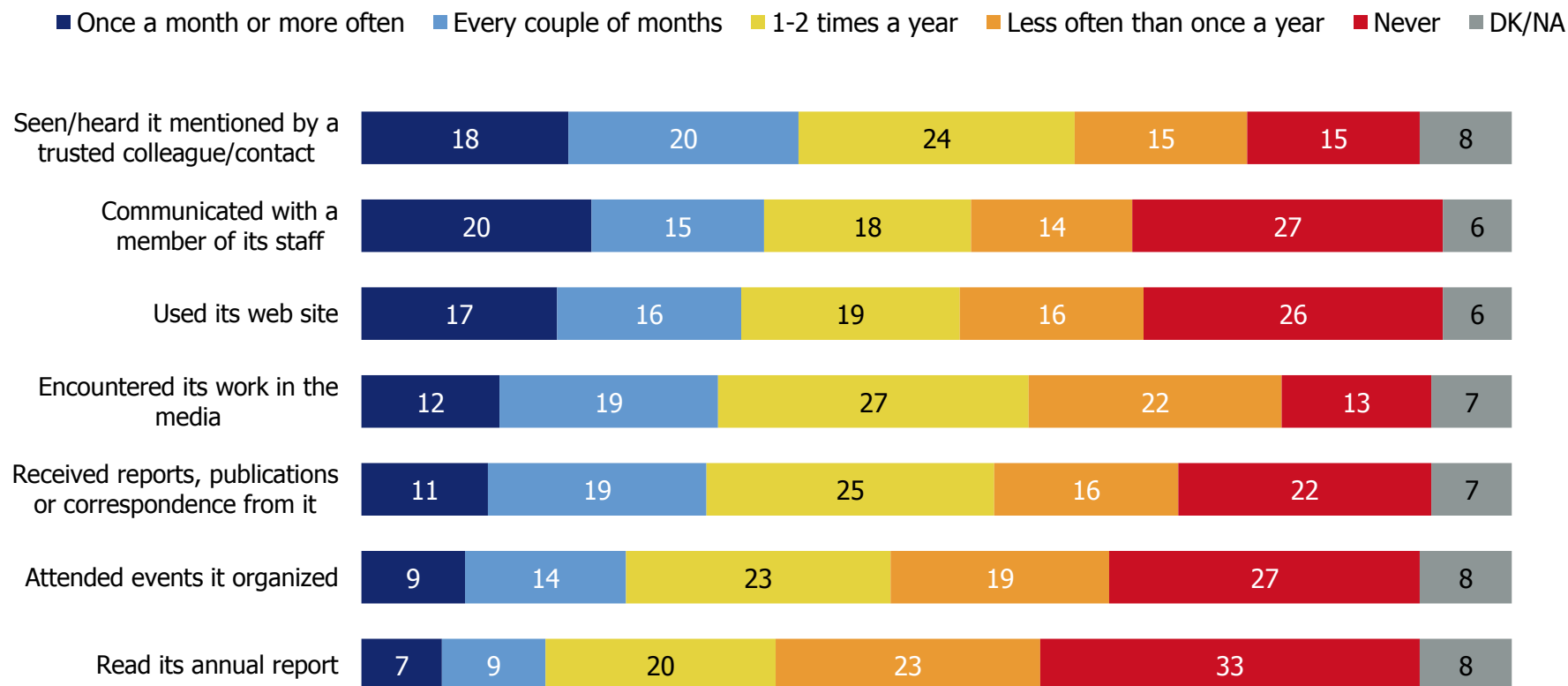
By Country, Africa, 2013

	Benin	Burkina Faso	Ethiopia	Ghana	Kenya	Nigeria	Rwanda	Senegal	Tanzania	Uganda
Less than one year	3	0	3	0	0	5	9	3	7	3
1 to less than 5 years	42	19	30	8	25	52	85	58	38	27
5 to less than 10 years	35	22	39	45	22	25	6	19	22	26
10 to less than 20 years	6	35	18	37	42	13	0	12	31	38
20 years or more	0	19	5	11	6	0	0	3	3	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, Africa, 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 the dissemination of the information 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 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. Critically, respondents perceive the in-person events promoted by think tanks and their knowledge of the policy making process and of regional issues to be of higher value relative to 2010.

## **Areas to Improve**

- Across all countries, respondents believe that think tanks in their country do not have adequate infrastructure in place to function effectively.
- Information provision is clearly also 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 “providing informed critique” is also relatively lower in many countries.
- Many believe think tanks could be more effective at partnering with public policy actors.

**IDRC**

International Development  
Research Centre



**CRDI**

Centre de recherches pour le  
développement international

# Ways to Improve Think Tanks in Africa

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

## **SLIDE 71 – by Africa total**

- When asked which of a list of factors is most important for improving think tank performance in their country, an overwhelming nine in ten respondents each point to improving the quality of the research and increasing the availability of trained and experienced staff (the latter being up slightly from 2010).
- Slightly more than three-quarters of respondents believe that having more audience-friendly presentations of the research findings could be valuable; a similar number point to increasing the awareness of think tank services (this has increased by 11% from 2010).

## **SLIDE 72 - by stakeholder type**

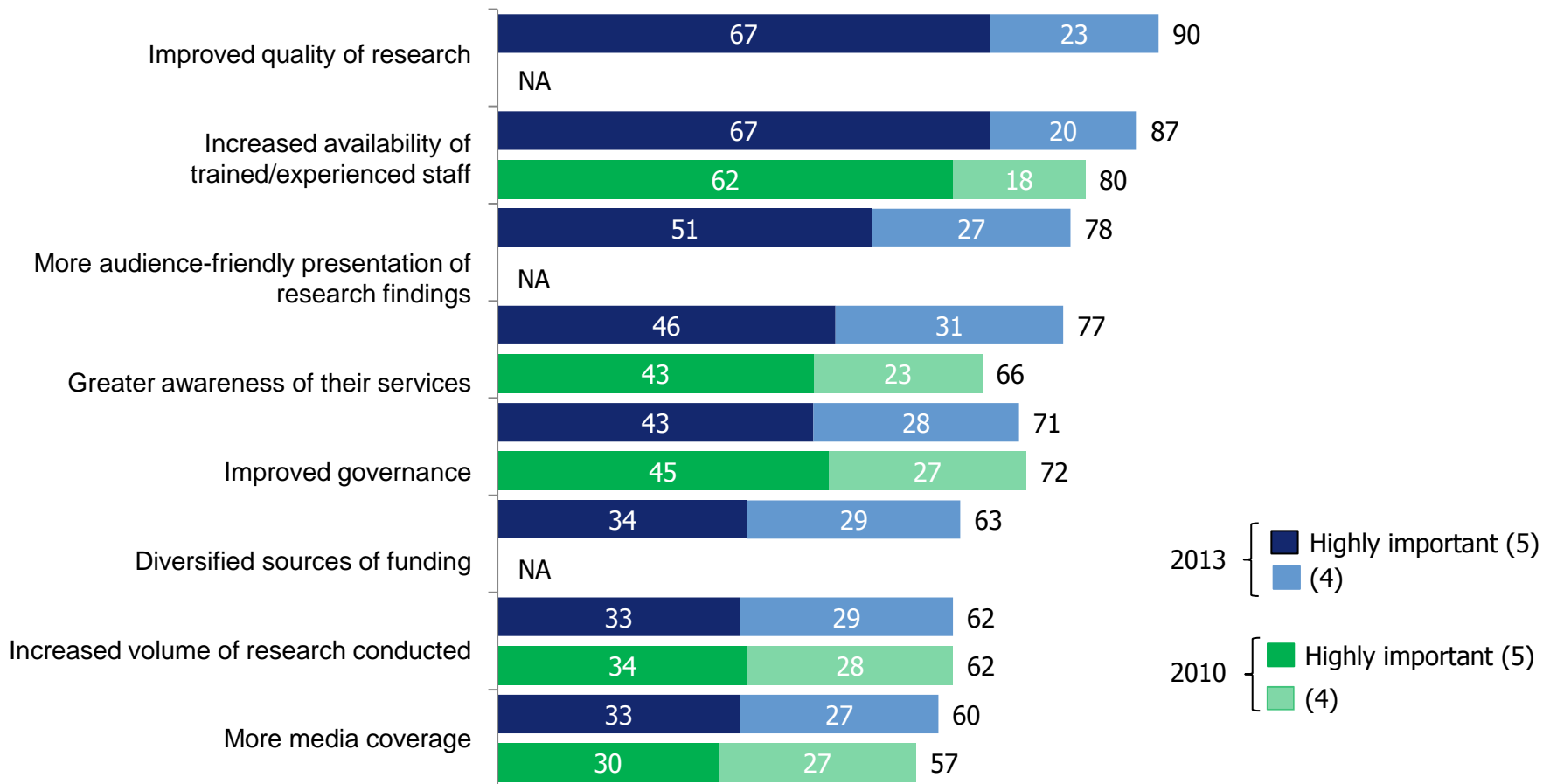
- Surveyed non-elected government officials, media, multilateral organizations, NGOs, private sector companies and academics agree that improving the quality of research and increasing the availability of experienced research staff are the most important factors to improve think tank performance.
- Elected government officials surveyed have a slightly different view, saying that improved perceptions will come as a result of increasing stakeholder awareness of think tank services. Indeed, most stakeholder audiences are more inclined than they were in 2010 to say that this is an important factor.

## **SLIDE 73 - 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 African markets to be the key factors to improving think tank performance. People in most countries (Nigeria stakeholders being an exception) are more likely than in 2010 to point to increased awareness of think tank services as a key factor.

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















Percent of Respondents Selecting "Important" (4+5),  
Africa, 2010–2013






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


Percent of Respondents Selecting “Important” (4+5),  
by Stakeholder Type, Africa, 2010–2013

	Overall average 2013		Elected government	Non-elected government	Media		Multilateral/ bilateral		NGO		Private sector		Research/ academia
Improved quality of research*	90		85	93	87		86		100		87		90
Increased availability of trained/experienced staff	87		90 	87	76		86		94		87 		88
More audience-friendly presentation of research findings*	78		83	76	84		74		84		72		74
Greater awareness of their services	77 		93 	72	80 		79 		82 		66 		75
Improved governance	71		73 	72	73		69 		74		64		71
Diversified sources of funding*	63		63	66	56		60		68		61		66
Increased volume of research conducted	61		71	69 	62		55		50 		52		69
More media coverage	59		68	55	69		60 		69 		44		55

 Most important factor

































 Second most important factor

 Increase of 10% or more from 2010 to 2013

 Decrease of 10% or less from 2010 to 2013


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

Percent of Respondents Selecting “Important” (4+5),  
by Country, Africa, 2010–2013

	Overall average 2013	Benin	Burkina Faso	Ethiopia	Ghana	Kenya	Nigeria	Rwanda	Senegal	Tanzania	Uganda
Improved quality of research*	90	93	90	83	89	90	90	90	95	88	93
Increased availability of trained/experienced staff	87	80 	85 	83	89	88	83 	88 	93 	90	93 
More audience-friendly presentation of research findings*	78	91	80	70	73	88	78	55	86	73	80
Greater awareness of their services	77 	70 	83 	75 	76	85	73 	75 	77 	88 	70 
Improved governance	71	65	78 	78	62 	68 	78	70 	84 	71	55 
Diversified sources of funding*	63	52	55	60	57	58	73	58	73	78	70
Increased volume of research conducted	61	61	53	60 	51 	55 	71	68 	43	80 	73 
More media coverage	59	48	63	63 	59 	58 	63	63 	48	73 	58

 Most important factor

 Second most important factor

 Increase of 10% or more from 2010 to 2013

 Decrease of 10% or less from 2010 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 10 participating African countries, broadly centering around the following key suggestions:

- Think tanks are urged to **better communicate the results of their research** and to disseminate it to a wider audience through television, radio and workshops. To achieve this, many recommend stronger collaboration with media and the private sector. Additionally, stakeholders would like reports and presentations to be more easily understandable, with less jargon, so it can appeal to a wider audience. With greater dissemination, respondents believe think tanks will have and should seek out more feedback on their research to determine if it is relevant.
- Independence from government and political influence is considered very important. While respondents want think tanks to be less influenced and reliant on government, they also want them to set up a clear relationship and **work with government** to improve access to information for both parties in order to apply new research to policy making. Many respondents feel that think tanks need to better communicate the results of their research or make it more easily accessible.
- Stakeholders want think tanks to gain a **better understanding of the local context**, to diversify research away from only economic analysis, and to collect more relevant primary data on a variety of issues such as youth and gender. Local staff recruitment and training are often cited as areas for improvement, and many would like to see less reliance on international consultants. The involvement and monitoring of local actors who are directly impacted by the research or policies is also considered very important.

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

*Do communicate on results, provide a better data analysis according to socio-cultural context rather than on econometric analysis. Also increase research teams.*

– Research/Academia, Benin

*It would be useful if these institutions try to work with the government. Currently they don't seem to work together.*

– Research/Academia, Ethiopia

*Before conducting the research, try to know about the culture and the way of living in the country. In addition, it would be great if the research institute focused on qualitative research.*

– NGO, Ethiopia

*They should have more collaboration with the media and have simple and friendly presentation without jargon.*

– Media, Ghana

*They should be neutral and must not be seen to belong to any political party. This neutrality would ensure everyone's trust in their findings and this will help my work.*

– Research/Academia, Ghana

*There should be grassroots integration and participation of policies. Local people should be deeply involved in research in order to encourage unbiased results and recommendations.*

– Private sector, Nigeria

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

*It might be better if they engage more efforts in dissemination of their findings of research and do follow up to know whether or not it is used by receivers/readers.*

– Media, Rwanda

*They should not do research to please government. I.e., They should be able to go to lower levels and find out the exact facts instead of concentrating on us the higher honorables and MPs.*

– Government-elected, Uganda

*We need a link between the research institutes and the administration structures in charge of the development strategies.*

– Government non-elected, Senegal

*They have to be more original and generate their own data rather than relay secondary data.*

– Research/Academia, Kenya

*They should reduce the bureaucracy and provide adequate data, be easy to access in terms of information and publicize it for all to see.*

– Multilateral/bilateral, Uganda

*Research should be based on country needs rather than needs of international nature which dictate what ought to be done internally within countries. Researchers should research on solutions to local challenges.*

– NGO, Tanzania

*1.they should invite other stakeholders apart from the government 2.provide their services to other clients apart from the government.*

– Government-elected, Kenya



For twenty-five years, GlobeScan has helped clients measure and build value-generating relationships with their stakeholders, and to work collaboratively in delivering a sustainable and equitable future.

Uniquely placed at the nexus of reputation, brand and sustainability, GlobeScan partners with clients to build trust, drive engagement and inspire innovation within, around and beyond their organizations.

[www.GlobeScan.com](http://www.GlobeScan.com)