



# Assessing the Participation of Researchers from Lower-Middle-Income Countries in Economic-Development-Policy Debates.

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## Abstract

According to such initial approaches as Modernization and Dependency Theory, local knowledge and the participation of local researchers in development-policy debates is unnecessary or even detrimental, but local researchers and local knowledge have recently been given a more prominent role. We empirically assess the participation of researchers in lower-middle-income countries in the economic-development-policy debates of their own countries and regions. We found they have little participation in either the local or the international arena. Locally, they tend to be excluded by policymakers who do not design economic policies based on scientific research, although we found variation across countries. At the international level, agencies place more emphasis on academic credentials than on policy relevance and positioning for use. For example, less than 10% of significant contributors to World Bank and United Nations Development Programme flagship reports worked in lower-middle-income countries at the time of publication. We conclude with a discussion of potential solutions.

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## I.1 Introduction

The degree to which local researchers in lower-middle-income countries participate in the economic-development-policy debates of their own countries and regions is an important and relatively neglected topic. To the best of our knowledge, little theoretical discussion exists and even less empirical evidence. Here, we first try to understand why the topic has received little attention, briefly reviewing economic-development thinking over time. In our view, a strong tradition in economics, inspired by the “one-size-fits-all” Modernization Theory, has considered the participation of local researchers irrelevant or at least of a second order of importance. Second, through the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data, we provide novel evidence that researchers in lower-middle-income countries participate little in both international and local development-policy debates.

A few points are worth clarifying at the outset. First, we care about the participation of local researchers because we assume they have local knowledge—a necessary input for designing welfare-enhancing policies.<sup>1</sup> In our opinion, several reasons justify the assumption that country-of-work is a reasonable proxy for possessing local knowledge. Researchers in lower-middle-income countries usually know the local culture, understand causal mechanisms and effects, possess the capacity to evaluate the credibility of theoretical and statistical assumptions, know local actors and institutions, understand informal rules and real politics, are in a better position to detect when a policy window opens, and possess the capacity to differentiate important questions from second-order ones.<sup>2</sup>

Second, our main quantitative tools measured the share of authors of local, regional, and international flagship reports who worked in a lower-middle-income countries at the time of publication. We reviewed flagship reports published by the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank, three major regional development banks (the African Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank), and local governments. We also conduct interviews and a survey that complemented quantitative estimates over a range of dimensions. These measures were limited because they covered only a part of development-policy debates. At the same time, the reports produced by international and regional organizations are important instruments for setting policy agendas and influencing opinions and preferences. Moreover, given the scarce evidence, we believe that our modest objective contributes to the literature.<sup>3</sup>

Finally, this paper says little about the participation of researchers in lower-middle-income countries in the production of laws or their actual implementation in the global south. Our focus on participation in policy debates and the production of policy-oriented knowledge

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<sup>1</sup> We focus on the participation of researchers, although we recognize that other local actors also have valuable policy-oriented knowledge.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Nugroho, Carden, and Antlov (2018). We recognize that “country of work” is not a perfect proxy. Some researchers working in high-income countries may have more local knowledge about a developing country than a researcher working in that country.

<sup>3</sup> Several authors, including Nunn (2019), have provided qualitative evidence indicating that local researchers have little participation, but very little quantitative evidence exists.

follows John Maynard Keynes' vision that "ideas shape the course of history," although we encourage further research focused on policy implementation.

## II.! Comments on the Role of Local Knowledge in Development Economics

A fundamental question is "Who can legitimately claim expert authority in development-policy debates?" According to the "Positivist" view, the answer is individuals who have scientific standards, which certainly can include researchers residing in lower-middle-income countries. Two other prominent normative views are the "Social Constructivist" approach to expertise, embodied by proponents of indigenous knowledge (Watene & Yap, 2015; Wynne, 1989); and the more nuanced "Third Way Expertise" approach, which holds that individuals who possess knowledge about development, such as local researchers but including other local individuals, can legitimately contribute to (socio)-scientific process (Collins & Evans, 2008; Byskov, 2017). All three philosophical approaches converge in the view that local researchers have a legitimate claim to participation in development-policy debates.

Initial development economists, however, would likely not have agreed. For proponents of Modernization Theory, the questions we asked were not very relevant and could even be detrimental. According to this theory, economically underdeveloped countries are traditional societies whose development depends upon the adoption of more modern practices and values. Because they have not adopted them, local voices should have minimal or no participation in the development process. Economist Walt Rostow was a major exponent of this view. His "Non-Communist Manifesto" argued for a mono-economics model wherein countries must pass through five stages of development. He believed that the U.S. government's interventions via foreign aid and expert advice could propel a country toward development and, hence, avoid remaining underdeveloped or falling into communism (Rostow, 1960). This view was influential in mainstream economics.<sup>4</sup>

On the other extreme of the ideological spectrum, Dependency Theory proposes that the global economic system comprises wealthy countries at the center and poor countries at the periphery and that the rich global north therefore extracts resources from the poor global south. Dependency Theory assumes that the exchange of goods and services is a zero-sum game that benefits the powerful and harms the weak. They therefore consider the poverty of the periphery to be the consequence of the wealth of the center and hold that underdeveloped countries should break all ties with the center, including "foreign aid" and

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<sup>4</sup> Note that the "Positivist" view, combined with "Modernization Theory," could be used to exclude researchers in lower-middle-income countries from development-policy debates by arguing that the scientific quality of institutions and researchers in such countries are inferior.

“policy advice,” if they wish to prosper.<sup>5</sup> According to Dependency Theory, development-policy recommendations produced by researchers in high-income countries are not really intended to help the development of poorer countries but are disguised tools of domination. Policy recommendations produced by researchers working in lower-middle-income countries are not, however, necessarily a guarantee of fairness. For dependency theorists (and neocolonialists), researchers in lower-middle-income countries are likely to be part of a small, privileged elite educated by former colonizers. As such, they usually benefit from the exploitation of their own country and fellow citizens (Frank, 1966),<sup>6</sup> such as was the case with the British and India’s civil service,<sup>7</sup> and prefer to emulate the culture of their oppressors rather than liberate and develop their own countries.<sup>8</sup> For modernization theorists, researchers in lower-middle-income countries tend to be unqualified and have neither the scientific skills nor the values to modernize their countries.

Today, however, most scholars occupy more middle ground and are more open to the idea that including local researchers in the formulation of development policy is necessary and beneficial. There has been policy convergence in recent years, with a pragmatic focus on figuring out what works in a given context. According to some scholars, this is partially inspired by the failures of universal, one-size-fits-all consensus recipes (Rodrik, 2006; Stiglitz & Schoenfelder, 2003).

Several authors, however, believe that the reductionist perspective of Modernization Theory has remained among some economists. For example, Jensen (2004) and Sachs (2005) criticized the International Monetary Fund for ignoring local economic conditions, cultures, and environments in the countries where the Fund requires reform. Easterly (2013) defined the “tyranny of experts” as the development community in international financial institutions and Washington, DC-based think tanks. Ferguson (1994) forcefully showed that, in Lesotho, the diagnostic constructed by the World Bank and other development agencies bore very

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<sup>5</sup> Important contributors to dependency theory are Paul Baran (1957), Walter Rodney (1972), and Andre Gunder Frank (1966). They borrowed many concepts from Marxism and from Neocolonialism, a term coined by Jean-Paul Sartre (1956) and popularized by Kwame Nkrumah, the first President of Ghana, who led the liberation from Britain in 1957.

<sup>6</sup> Fanon (1983), a Pan-Africanist and Marxist, was particularly concerned with the psychopathology of colonization. He stated, “The native [black African] intellectual has clothed his aggressiveness in his barely veiled desire to assimilate himself to the colonial world” (47), calling such intellectuals “colonized.”

<sup>7</sup> Some researchers have argued that the World Bank plays that role today (Anwaruddin, 2014). A large literature, usually written by non-economists, argues that International Monetary Fund conditionality and World Bank programs are disguised forms of domination that reduce welfare in the less developed world. Munck (2003), for example, claimed that the severe Argentine 2001 crisis was caused largely by neoliberal policies imposed by the International Monetary Fund; Munarriz (2008) argued that the World Bank contributed to the expansion of corporate mining in Latin America, which caused the forced displacement of indigenous communities and destruction of the environment; and Moyo (2009) showed the ways in which foreign aid trapped some African countries in a vicious cycle of dependency and corruption.

<sup>8</sup> Several researchers, including Raul Prebisch (1950), Arthur Lewis (1954), Albert Hirschman (1968), and Alexander Gerschenkron (1962), rejected early on the one-size-fits-all thesis of development. They insisted on the existence of country-specific barriers, and hence, on the need of country-specific policies.

little resemblance to reality.<sup>9</sup> More recently, Nunn (2019) showed that ignoring local context and settings limited the effectiveness and understanding of study results.<sup>10</sup>

Because local experts usually have a better understanding of local context, their participation in the production of policy recommendations is likely to be welfare improving, though this is far from the only reason for supporting the participation of local researchers. Other motives include the need to counter-balance the excessive power of developed countries over international financial institutions,<sup>11</sup> the need to provide a sense of ownership among recipient countries of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank programs,<sup>12</sup> and the need to develop research capacity in lower-middle-income countries.

The scarce empirical evidence that documents the insufficient participation of local researchers (and/or the excessive agenda-setting power of global northern researchers) relies largely on case studies and less on quantitative analyses.<sup>13</sup>

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### III.! Data and Methodology

Defining “economic-development-policy debates” involves some complexities. First, policy debates are one component of the policymaking process. Whether debates translate into laws and regulations varies across societies depending on such characteristics as how democratic the political regime is (democratic regimes are considered to be more receptive to policy debates). Second, policy debates can take place at the national, regional, or international level. Third, within each level, debates take place in legislative bodies, media outlets, research institutions, and other civil-society organizations. Fourth, these debates may be more or less formal and may employ a variety of methods and tools of communication, from signed, written documents to messages sent via messaging platforms.

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<sup>9</sup> Ferguson (1994) also showed that the claim of leftist political economists, who have often argued that the real purpose of development projects is to aid capitalist penetration into Third World countries, is not borne out in many cases, Lesotho being one example.

<sup>10</sup> For example, the introduction of modern agricultural practices in Bali resulted in greater crop damage because traditional farming practices unknowingly helped to control pests (Lansing & Kremer, 1995). Other well-known case study showed how Cumbrian sheep farmers contributed to the scientific understanding of the dangers of radioactive fallout (Wynne, 1989).

<sup>11</sup> According to Breen (2013), most scholars agree that decision-making by the International Monetary Fund is not merely technocratic but also guided by political and economic concerns; the United States is the International Monetary Fund's most powerful member. Similarly, one of the most common criticisms of the World Bank is the non-democratic way it is governed. While the institution represents 188 countries, it is run by the small number of economically powerful countries that provide most of its funding.

<sup>12</sup> Boughton and Mourmouras (2004) and Stiglitz (2006) have pointed out that excessive conditionality breaks the links among a recipient country's people, its government, and the goals of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, undermining local political institutions.

<sup>13</sup> We found some studies quantifying the marginalization of researchers in the global south in the publication of academic papers and in participation in editorial boards (Dahdouh-Gubas et al., 2003; Cummings & Hoebink 2016; Amarante & Zurbrigg, 2020). To the best of our knowledge, however, few quantitative estimates exist of southern researchers' participation in development-policy debates.



### 3.1! Quantitative Analysis

We computed the share of authors (more precisely of “significant contributors”) of flagship development reports who worked in lower-middle-income countries at the time of publication, including reports at the national, regional, and international level and those produced by organizations including the World Bank and United Nations Development Programme.

With the term “significant contributors,” we attempted to capture individuals who had substantial influence on the content of the report. More precisely, we considered significant contributors to the United Nations Development Programme’s Human Development Report to be the director and lead author, members of the research team, named authors and contributors, and members of the advisory board. In the case of the World Bank’s World Development Report, we included principal editors, co-editors, individuals providing “general guidance” or advice (i.e., members of the advisory committee), and team leaders, team members, and principal authors. Using this definition, we included 1,196 “significant contributors.”

The first quantitative measure we computed was the share of significant contributors to international development flagship reports who were, at the time of publication, located in lower-middle-income countries.<sup>14</sup> We covered the whole population of reports (i.e., the Human Development Report from 1990 to 2020 and the World Development Report from 1978 to 2020).

The second quantitative measure was the share of significant contributors to regional flagship reports who were, at the time of publication, working in lower-middle-income countries. With “regional flagship report,” we refer to the main annual reports of the three regional development banks: the African Development Bank Annual Report, the Asian Development Outlook Report, and the Development in the Americas Report. We included the entire population of reports (the African Development Bank Annual Report from 2007 to 2019, the Asian Development Outlook Report from 2000 to 2020, and the Development in the Americas Report from 2009 to 2020).

The third quantitative measure we computed was the share of significant contributors to national development reports written by three institutions: the national government, the local United Nations Development Programme, and the local World Bank office.<sup>15</sup> We analyzed the four countries in which we work and know more closely: Argentina, Cameroon, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka, analyzing the whole population of local United Nations

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<sup>14</sup> A lower-middle-income-country researcher is one who works at an institution located in a lower-middle-income country; the nationality or citizenship of the researcher plays no role in the analysis.

<sup>15</sup> We analyzed the United Nations Development Programme’s National Development Report and the World Bank Systematic Country Diagnosis Reports. We did not cover the International Monetary Fund national reports because a relatively large empirical literature on the effects of the International Monetary Fund conditionality already exists. See, for example, Forster et al. (2019).

Development Programme and World Bank reports for each nation along with one representative national government report.<sup>16</sup>

### 3.2! Qualitative Analysis

These quantitative measures, however, have some limitations. If we found that almost all authors of national reports published by the government were local, for example, did that necessarily imply that independent local researchers were highly involved in the production of policy documents? If local researchers mostly wrote local United Nations Development Programme national reports, does that necessarily mean that local knowledge is considered important or were these researchers following guidelines imposed by headquarters? Conversely, if authors of international flagship reports overwhelmingly worked in high-income countries, were the voices and local knowledge of lower-middle-income country researchers necessarily ignored? Do these international organizations follow a bottom-up strategy?<sup>17</sup>

To shed some light on these issues, we conducted three different surveys to complement the quantitative data. We interviewed and surveyed (i) researchers working in lower-middle-income countries, (ii) high-ranking policymakers, and (iii) authors of local United Nations Development Programme national reports. These instruments provided qualitative data that addressed both national and international policy arenas and allowed us to understand the mechanisms and obstacles that affected local researchers' participation in policy debates.

We evaluated the involvement of local researchers in compiling development-policy reports across two interfaces: the research-to-policy interface and the policy-to-practice interface (Harper, Jones & Tincati, 2010). For the first, we considered to what extent the development of research reports involved local researchers (and other stakeholders) in the process from generation of research to translation of that research into policy. In the second, we considered the extent to which the planning process included a strategy to ensure that reports could influence policy in practice. The surveys allowed us (1) to explore involvement in the research process at different levels and stages, including research conceptualization, data analysis, policy recommendations, and dissemination and (2) to attempt to document the extent to which the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank followed a top-down or bottom-up approach.

We used an adaptation of the research quality plus (RQ plus) methodology developed by the International Development Research Centre to assess United Nations Development Programme national reports (Ofir et al., 2016). Accordingly, we considered the following dimensions: a) consideration given to ensuring research quality (research quality); b)

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<sup>16</sup> One important challenge was access to policy documents produced by national governments given that (in some countries) the most important ones are informal and not available to the public.

<sup>17</sup> A development agency follows a top-down strategy when upper management located in a country in the global north sets the agenda. Conversely, a bottom-up strategy implies the participation of personnel located in the developing world.

considerations given to the use of consultative processes to obtain local opinions and views (research integrity); c) consideration given to types of knowledge demanded by end users (research importance); and, d) consideration given to ensuring that research would be communicated in such a way as to influence policy (positioning for use).

In addition, interviews with former high-ranking policymakers helped us understand policy-making processes and the influence of local and international researchers on this process. We specifically tried to understand to what extent local, regional, and international reports guided policy-making, how local knowledge was considered in policy-making, and how political interest guided policy-making. In these interviews, we explicitly offered anonymity to increase the chances of receiving truthful responses.

Finally and importantly, the surveys brought the voices of researchers in lower-middle-income countries to the discussion (Carden et al., 2019). Appendix 2 presents the survey of researchers, Appendix 3 describes the survey of high-ranking policymakers, and Appendix 4 presents the survey to authors of national development reports.

## IV. Results

### 4.1! Quantifying Participation in Economic-Development-Policy Debates

#### 4.1.1! International Reports

Table 1 presents the contributions of local researchers to international reports. Only 7% contributors were working in a lower-middle-income countries at the time of publication. In the case of United Nations Development Programme’s Human Development Report, the figure was 12.3% while, in the case of the World Bank’s World Development Report, it was just 0.2%. These figures have changed little over time.

**Table 1: Share of Contributors Working in a Lower-Middle-Income Country at the Time of Publication**

Role	United Nations Development Programme Human Development Report	World Bank World Development Report
Director/Editor	0%	0%
Author	9.1%	0.3%
Advisory board	27.3%	0%
Total	12.3%	0.2%

Notes: For the Human Development Report, the total number of people participating as editors, authors, and special contributors considered in this analysis is 545 from 1990 to 2020. For the advisory board we consider the 135 people that participated in the years 2020, 2015, 2010, 2005, 2000, 1995 and 1990. For the World Development Report, the total number of people considered in the analysis is 516 from 1978 to 2020.

Moreover, southern participants in the Human Development Report are, in many cases, politicians and activists (e.g., Lula da Silva, Kailash Satyarthi, and Samir Radwan). Researchers and professors working in southern universities are rarely invited to participate, though the contrary occurs among northern participants. That is, the chances that southern researchers would participate in international-development-policy fora were dim compared to the chances that their colleagues would work in northern institutions. The extremely low levels of participation in international-development flagship reports among southern-based researchers, along with the lack of improvement over time, are disturbing facts that have not received sufficient attention.

#### 4.1.2! Regional Reports

Results regarding contributors to regional reports are presented in Table 2, showing large variation across regions. In Latin America and the Caribbean, less than 10% of significant contributors work in the region, while the figures are about 80% for Africa and Asia.<sup>18</sup>

**Table 2: Percent of Contributors Working In Lower-Middle-income countries at the Time of Publication**

Role	African Development Bank Annual Report	Asian Development Bank Asian Development Outlook Report	Inter-American Development Bank Development in the Americas Report
Director/Editor	100%	85.0%	0%
Author	100%	78.6%	8.5%
Advisory committee	66.3%	85.7%	14.8%
Total	86.8%	80.8%	8.3%

Notes: For African Development Bank Reports, the total number of people considered in the analysis was 220 from 2007 to 2019; for Asian Development Outlook Reports, 291 from 2000 to 2020; and, for Development in the Americas Reports, it was 228 from 2009 to 2020.

Most authors of the three regional flagship reports work in the headquarters of the regional bank. However, there is a key difference between the Inter-American Development Bank and the other two organizations. The headquarters of the Inter-American Development Bank are in Washington, DC, while the headquarters of the two other regional banks are in developing countries (in Mandaluyong, the Philippines and in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire). This contributes to a situation in which most authors of the Inter-American Development Bank report are in the US while, for the other two banks, they are largely in a developing country.

<sup>18</sup> For the Development in the Americas Report, we defined significant contributors as those who participated as editors, authors of chapters, and members of the advisory committee; for the Asian Development Outlook Report, we included the lead economist, authors, and editorial advisors; for the African Development Bank Annual Report, we included the chief economist, members of board committees, and members of the report team.

### 4.1.3! National Reports

**Table 3: Share of Contributors Who Worked in the Four Countries Under Study, by Type of Report**

Country	World Bank Systematic Country Diagnosis	United Nations Development Programme	Government report
Argentina	100%	97.8%	100%
Cameroon	32.5%	90%	100%
The Philippines	32.4%	100%	100%
Sri Lanka	30%	80%	100%

Notes: The total number of significant contributors to the National Human Development Report were forty-seven in Argentina, ten in Cameroon, fourteen in the Philippines, and twenty-three in Sri Lanka. The number of people participating as significant contributors to the World Bank Systematic Country Diagnosis were five in Argentina, forty in Cameroon, thirty-four in the Philippines, and twenty in Sri Lanka.

Unsurprisingly, the government hired local individuals to write national reports in the four countries we analyzed. Clear differences exist, however, between national reports published by United Nations Development Programme and those issued by the World Bank. While it is largely local researchers who write United Nations Development Programme reports, the opposite is true with World Bank reports (with the exception of Argentina). This is, in our opinion, a very positive characteristic of the local United Nations Development Programme offices, making their development reports more suitable to the local context.

Two important dimensions not captured in Table 3 are the incentives authors receive and how those incentives shape the content of reports. In the four countries we studied, authors of both the World Bank Systematic Country Diagnosis Reports and the National Human Development Report tended to emphasize the report's rigor because they are rewarded according to the technical merit of the report. This is, however, usually not the case with policy-relevant government reports. In some countries, such as Argentina and Sri Lanka, the authors of government reports are often political appointees. They do have technical skills but are not independent researchers or career civil servants. The incentives in their case lead to a situation in which reports are political manifestos that lack scientific rigor. In the Philippines, however, government reports are more likely to be written by career civil servants and, hence, are less politicized. Finally, in the case of Cameroon, because of the country's dependence on foreign assistance, government reports are written by public employees who are strongly influenced by international organizations. For instance, the structural and institutional reforms set out in the 2020 edition of the main government report fell mainly within the framework of programs supported by the International Monetary Fund and by Cameroon's other technical and financial partners such as the World Bank, the European Union, and the French Development Agency. Appendix 1 provides greater detail and a brief country-specific analysis of these issues.

## 4.2! Qualitative Analysis of Participation in Development Policy

### 4.2.1! Opinions of Researchers Working in Lower-Middle-Income Countries

Between March and May 2021, we asked researchers in lower-middle-income countries to complete an online survey of their opinions regarding the participation of researchers in development-policy fora. We sent invitations via email to colleagues working on development issues, using our own contacts, as well as to email addresses obtained from the IDEAS/Research Papers in Economics database and university websites. Our objective was to collect approximately twenty responses from researchers in Africa, twenty in Latin American, and forty in Asia.<sup>19</sup> We attempted to cover countries with different GDP-per-capita levels to capture heterogeneity in the participation of local researchers according to country income.

We received responses from ninety researchers from thirty-four countries (twenty-three from Africa, forty-five from Asia, and twenty-two from Latin America). Appendix 5 presents the distribution of responses by researchers' countries of work. The response rate was 39% in Africa, 33% in Asia, and 42% in Latin America.<sup>20</sup> A large majority of respondents held a PhD degree (77%), and the rest were completing a PhD (4%) or had a Master's (17%) or a BA (2%). Most were employed at local universities (73%), 26% worked at think tanks and research institutions, and only 1% worked at the central bank.

Below we present basic statistics describing the opinion of researchers residing in lower-middle-income countries. We also ran separate OLS regressions to analyze how the extent of participation of local researchers correlated with such country-level variables as GDP per capita.

According to their opinions, development-policy reports are perceived to have a moderate to high influence on actual policies. The reports published by the national government have the highest level of influence, followed by local United Nations Development Programme and World Bank reports World Bank, international flagship reports and, finally, regional reports. Table 4 shows the values using a scale from 1 to 5, with 5 indicating a very high level of influence.

**Table 4: Influence on Public Policies by Type of Report**

Type of Report	Influence on Public Policy
National Government	3.9
Local United Nations Development Programme/World Bank	3.3
Regional	3.0
International	3.2

Note: Data were gathered from the opinions of researchers in lower-middle-income countries who answered the following question: "On a scale from 1 to 5, where 5 is very high, what is the influence of the following policy reports on actual policy design and implementation in your country?"

<sup>19</sup> These figures responses roughly reflect the relative population by continent and were selected to have an equal share among our regions of work.

<sup>20</sup> Initially, we asked researchers to complete a long survey with open-ended questions that took about one hour to complete. We received only twenty-three responses and decided to submit a shorter version that took about fifteen minutes to complete.

In our multivariate analysis, we found (i) that national reports published by the government tended to be more influential in countries with a higher GDP per capita (purchasing power parity); (ii) that local United Nations Development Programme/World Bank reports, and international flagship reports were more influential in countries with smaller populations; and (iii) that all types of reports tended to be less influential in Latin America.<sup>21</sup>

Respondents reported that national reports published by the government were mostly written by local individuals while regional and international reports were largely written by people located abroad. This is consistent with our quantitative data regarding place of residence of authors as shown above.

**Table 5: Location of Authors by Type of Report**

Location of Authors	National government reports	Local United Nations Development Programme/ World Bank reports	International and regional reports
Exclusively local	36.5%	3.1%	2.3%
Mostly local	55.6%	32.8%	4.7%
Mostly international	7.9%	60.9%	62.8%
Exclusively international	0.0%	3.1%	30.2%

Note: Data were gathered from the opinions of researchers in lower-middle-income countries.

Again, we also ran an OLS regression, but in this case the dependent variable was the extent of participation of local individuals in each type of report.<sup>22</sup> We found that national reports published by the government were more likely to be written by local individuals in countries with higher GDP per capita and that local United Nations Development Programme/World Bank national reports were more likely to be written by locals in larger countries and in Latin America.<sup>23</sup>

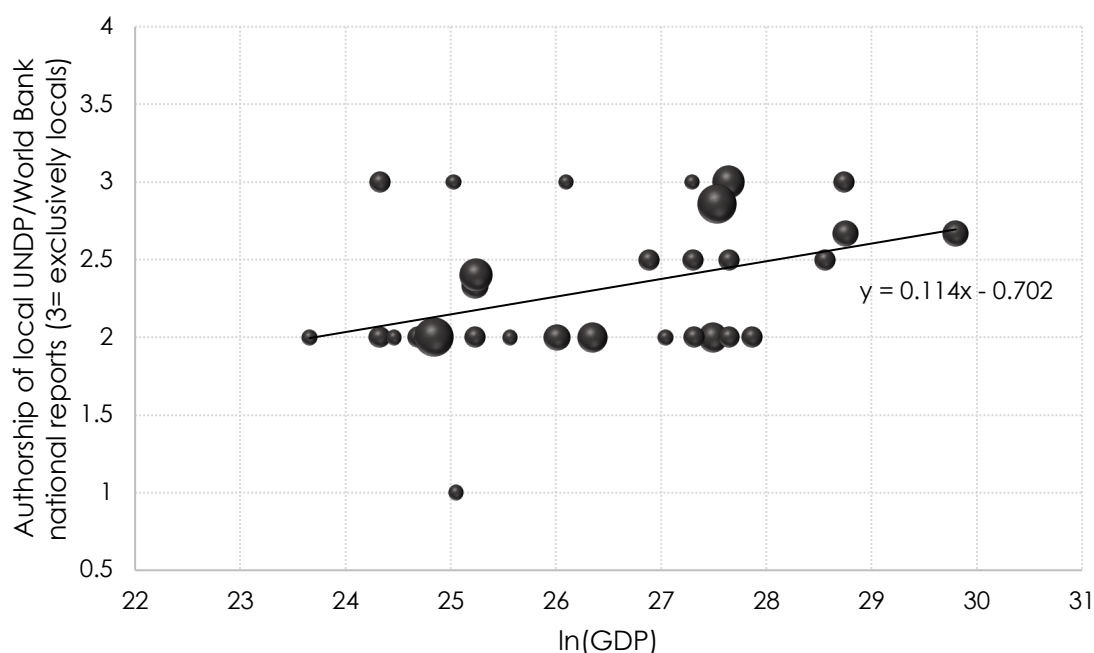
Figure 1 illustrates the positive correlation between the size of the country (measured by GDP) and the participation of local individuals in the country reports published by the local United Nations Development Programme or World Bank office. Although this is a correlation, a plausible interpretation is that, in larger countries, the government finances the local offices of some organizations and, as a result, the authors of the reports are more likely to be local. The correlation can also illustrate that more local individuals with the necessary skills and expertise to write reports are located in larger and richer countries. We return to this issue in our analysis of the qualitative data.

<sup>21</sup> These results were obtained by running separate OLS regressions (one for each type of report) and including the following covariates: GDP per capita PPP, population, regional dummies, and researcher's level of education. Results not shown available upon request. We only comment on coefficients that were statistically significant at the 10% level or better.

<sup>22</sup> We created an ordinal variable equal to 3 if the report was exclusively written by locals, 2 if the report was mostly written by locals, 1 if the report was mostly written by international authors, and 0 if the report was written exclusively by international authors. Qualitatively similar results were obtained with an ordered probit regression.

<sup>23</sup> Results not shown are available upon request. Here, we comment only on coefficients that were statistically significant at the 10% level or better.

**Figure 1: Relationship between GDP and Authorship of Local United Nations Development Programme/World Bank National Development Reports**



Note: Each data point represents a country. The size of the bubble captures the number of responses per country. Data on authorship were gathered from the opinions of researchers in lower-middle-income countries.

In Table 6 we present the results by task. The participation of local researchers in the dissemination of reports was perceived to be relatively high for all types of reports. The participation of local researchers in agenda-setting, however, was only moderate (although that participation was higher in the case of local United Nations Development Programme or World Bank reports, but was even lower in the case of international flagship reports).

**Table 6: Engagement of Local Researchers by Tasks and Type of Report**

Task	National Government	Local United Nations Development Programme/World Bank	Regional & International
Identification of problem and agenda setting	2.00	2.12	1.74
Literature review	2.10	2.28	1.83
Data analysis	2.14	2.06	1.96
Policy analysis	2.26	2.29	1.93
Dissemination	2.26	2.29	2.14

Note: Level of engagement was measured on a scale from 1 (low) to 3 (high). Data were gathered from the opinions of researchers in lower-middle-income countries.

National reports, published either by the government or the local office of the United Nations Development Programme or the World Bank, were perceived to be moderately or highly informed by local context. Conversely, local context was barely considered in regional and international reports (see Figure 2).



**Figure 2: Relationship between Location of Authors and Importance of Local Context, by Type of Report**



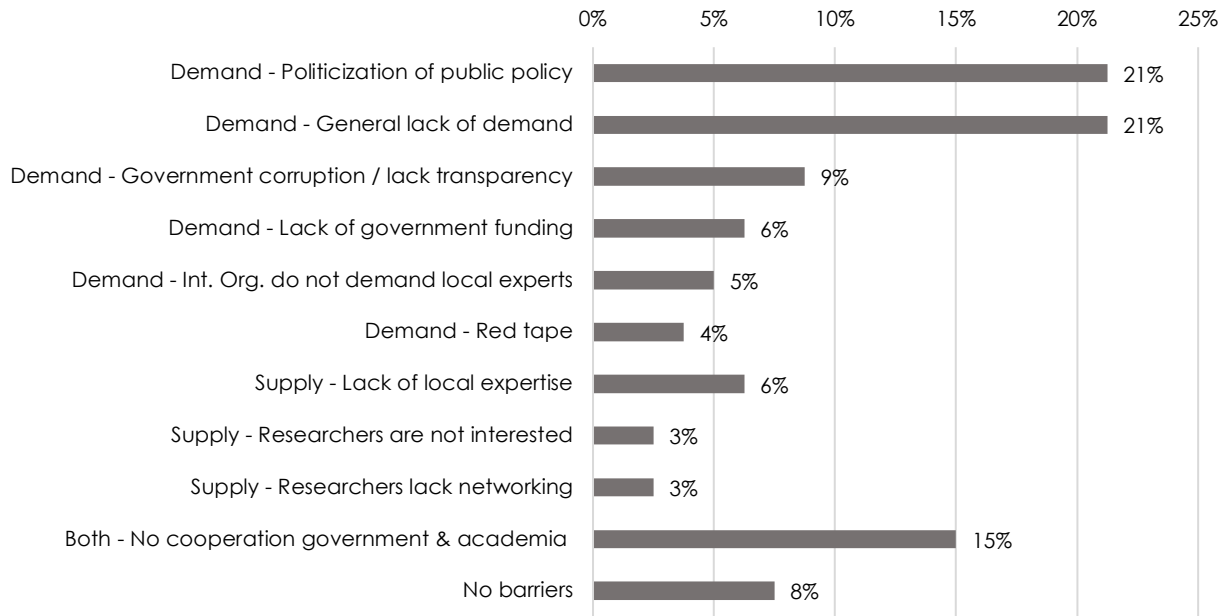
A particular interesting finding is that, while survey respondents believed that national reports published by the government were written overwhelmingly by local individuals, only 8% thought that local *researchers* effectively participated. The fundamental explanation for the lack of participation of local researchers was that the government had not demanded their service (65%). Problems on the supply side, such as lack of networking, skills, or interest among researchers, represented 12% of reported barriers, along with lack of cooperation between the demand (government) and the supply (researchers and universities).

Figure 3 presents the results obtained from responses to the open-ended question, “What are the main barriers to enhance the participation of national/local researchers in the production of national reports written by the government of your country?”<sup>24</sup> As mentioned before, only 8% believed that local researchers did not confront significant barriers. Interestingly, 21% of respondents felt that the main barrier was the politicization of the reports. Researchers who were independent, who were not willing to “write what the politicians wanted to read,” or who were not affiliated with the ruling party or government elite were excluded. Moreover, another 9% of researchers mentioned government corruption and lack of transparency as main obstacle. That is, respondents reported that the politicization of public policies was the most important barrier that local researchers faced to being heard in local development debates.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>24</sup> We counted the total number of barriers reported, allowing respondents to report as many barriers as they considered necessary.

<sup>25</sup> Previous studies with similar findings include Stein et al. (2006) for Latin America, Amadi and Ekekwe (2014) for Africa, and Jahan and Shahan (2008) for Asia.

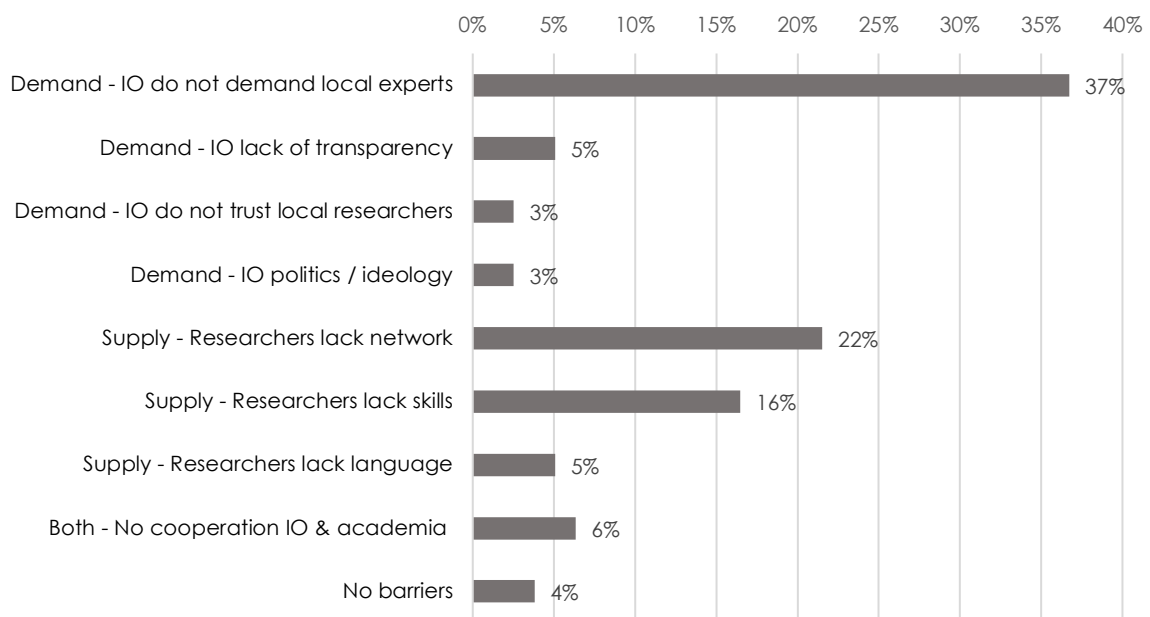
**Figure 3: Barriers to Local Researchers' Participation in Government Reports**



Note: The data are the opinions of researchers in lower-middle-income countries.

In the case of regional and international reports, a large majority of respondents (96%) thought that researchers in developing countries confronted significant barriers to participation, with lack of demand from international organizations (48%) and supply limitations (43%) cited about equally. The main constraints on the supply side were lack of networks (22%), lack of skills (16%), and language barriers (5%). Finally, 6% of respondents emphasized insufficient cooperation between international organizations and local research institutions.

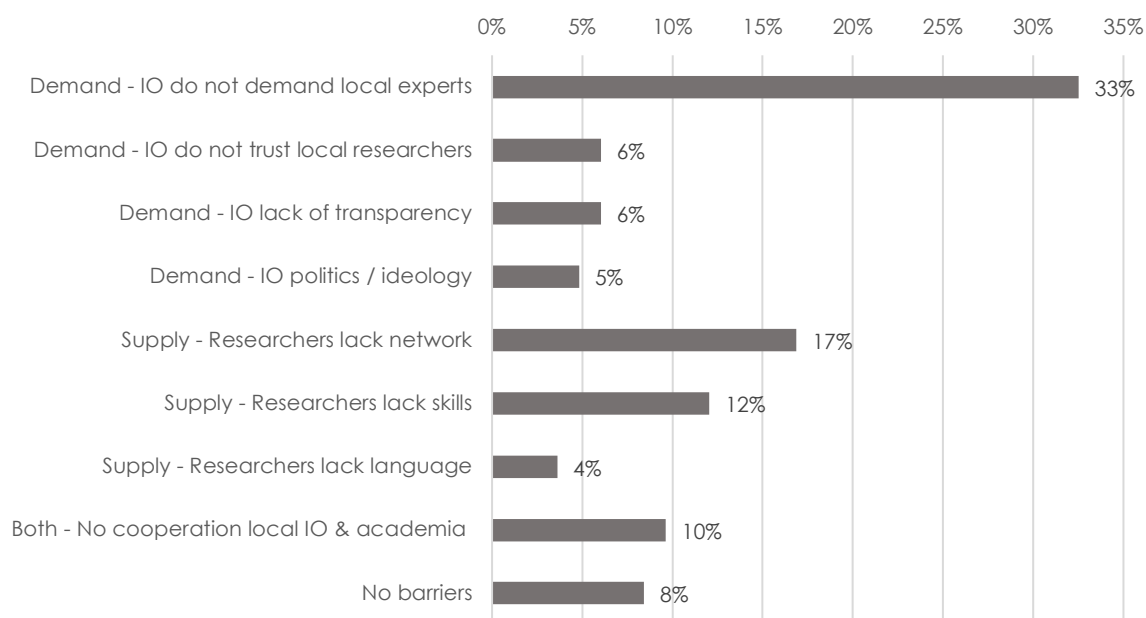
**Figure 4: Barriers to Local Researchers' Participation in Regional and International Reports**



Note: The data are the opinions of researchers in lower-middle-income countries.

The barriers that local researchers faced to participating in local United Nations Development Programme or World Bank national reports were somewhere between the cases described above.

**Figure 5: Barriers to Local Researchers' Participation in Local United Nations Development Programme/World Bank Reports**



Note: The data are the opinions of researchers in lower-middle-income countries.

## 4.3! Qualitative Analysis

### 4.3.1! Research Quality Plus of United Nations Development Programme National Report

Our qualitative analysis showed that National Human Development reports produced by national United Nations Development Programme officers scored well in ensuring research quality, research integrity, and research importance (see Table 7). Experienced and qualified local researchers are chosen to compile these reports, and report compilation, from conceptualization to validation of results, was guided by consultations with stakeholders at different levels. The reports could, however, be positioned better for use. In most cases, dissemination of the reports was limited to the launch of the publication and a few workshops. As a result of the involvement of researchers with experience and interest in advocating the policies being recommended, only in the Philippines could reports be said to have translated into policy.

**Table 7: Consideration for Research Quality, Integrity, Importance, and Positioning for Use of United Nations Development Programme Country Reports**

<b>Research quality</b>	Extensive consideration was given to ensuring the academic quality of the report in all countries considered. Research teams consisted of local researchers with PhDs who had research experience in the subject area. In Sri Lanka, researchers were chosen through a competitive bidding process. In the Philippines, researchers also showed commitment to the policy change under study.
<b>Research integrity</b>	Through workshops with local, international, and sub-national scholars, experts, and officials, the research process considered the views and opinions of relevant communities or populations in all countries throughout the research process from conceptualization to research validation.
<b>Research importance</b>	In all countries, local researchers conceptualized the research and decided on the methodology based upon a broad theme provided by the local United Nations Development Programme office. The importance of the research was ascertained through consultations with stakeholders. Development of the concept was informed by trends in developing countries and by relevant literature and was based on the strongly perceived needs of stakeholders.
<b>Positioning for use</b>	<p>The positioning the reports for use varied across countries. In the Philippines, the policy influence of report was high, partially because of the involvement of researchers who had demonstrated a commitment to the proposed policy change through membership in an advocacy organization. In Sri Lanka, Cameroon, and Argentina, conversely, the positioning of the report for use was less than satisfactory.</p> <p>In Sri Lanka this was partly due to insufficient advocacy around the report. Dissemination of findings was limited to a few local awareness-building workshops. Government change that took place soon after the report was launched also limited its use. Because the report was a joint publication by the United Nations Development Programme and the government of Sri Lanka, the new government was not in favor of using the findings.</p> <p>In Cameroon, despite recommendations judged to be very good, implementation often struggled to be translated into practice, mainly because of budgetary problems.</p> <p>In Argentina, the statistics generated by the report were used but not policy recommendations. Since 2020, the local United Nations Development Programme office in Argentina has focused more on publishing policy-oriented working papers, which are shorter than the national report and more informative from a policy perspective.</p>

### 4.3.2! Use Of Research in Policymaking: Opinions of High-Ranking Policymakers

#### *Influence of research on local policy-making by international agencies*

In the opinions of high-ranking policymakers, policies by international agencies received greater consideration when they were accompanied by aid/funding. In Cameroon, policies were heavily influenced by international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the United Nations Development Programme (the country has been under a structural adjustment program through the International Monetary Fund). The African

Development Bank has also influenced policies in Cameroon, especially when policy recommendations have been funded by the bank itself. In Sri Lanka, too, policy recommendations by the International Monetary Fund were considered by policymakers when the country was under a stand-by arrangement with the International Monetary Fund. In Argentina, technocrats have tended to be hired specifically to deal with international organizations (and international reports) because they “speak a similar language.” While the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank, development banks, and the International Monetary Fund are often seen as examples of foreign interference, they have to be taken into account because of the countries’ dependence on foreign funding.

In the Philippines and Sri Lanka, policymakers mentioned that the direct influence of national, regional, and international reports on government policy-making was minimal. Policies were guided to a certain degree by international flagship reports but the influence was not direct. International reports, to a limited extent, may have indirectly influenced policy by increasing awareness of issues and by creating public debate.

According to respondents, the main advantage of international experts was that they had knowledge from comparable countries, which was useful for designing local policies. They also felt, however, that local experts were better able to interpret data because they could relate more closely to the local political-economic context.

High-ranking policymakers argued that the influence of research on policy-making depended upon trust and on the alignment of ideology between the government and the research agency. For example, according to informants in Sri Lanka, when the government perceived that recommendations were balanced and credible, they were more likely to accept them. Adoption of recommendations differed from regime to regime, however. When differences existed between the ideology of the ruling regime and that of the International Monetary Fund, there was no influence on local policies.

The influence of research on policy-making was also dependent upon the sector of research. According to informants in Sri Lanka, issues raised by regional reports regarding monetary policy were already known to policymakers and, as a result, added no value, but research on health, education, and poverty had a greater influence.

The high turnover of international experts in national offices also contributed to the limited influence of their research on policy-making. International experts took time to get to know local contexts but tended to be transferred out before they were able to influence local policies. This also created high opportunity costs for local officers because local experts were required to brief new international experts continually.

### *The influence of local research on policy-making*

The acceptance of local research in policy-making varied across countries. In Cameroon, local technocrats, of which about 10% had PhDs or master’s degrees, generally compiled policy reports, and the acceptance of local policy recommendations varied from case to case. In contrast, in the Philippines, local knowledge tended to have more prominence, though that was not always the case. In Sri Lanka, policies at the Central Bank were guided mostly by

reports prepared by experienced and qualified local staff (more than a quarter held a master's or a PhD).

In Argentina, reports written by local technocrats and long-term public employees had little influence because economic policies were decided by the president and his close collaborators. Because political parties are weakly institutionalized, party members also had little say. Economic policies therefore corresponded to the objectives of the president, producing short-term biases in economic policies and leading to recurrent fiscal deficits, large exchange-rate fluctuations, and excessive monetary emission. For the same reason, policies without immediate benefits were usually not prioritized, and little consideration was given to local knowledge.

### *Are local policies guided by political considerations?*

In Sri Lanka, local policies are guided by political considerations to a certain extent. Policymakers are elected by the public, so policies influence electoral and political considerations. For example, the decision to intervene in the foreign-exchange market to prevent excessive depreciation of the rupee was partly motivated by political considerations, although some economic benefit followed the policies.

In Argentina, policies are made under emergency conditions due to macroeconomic instability. As a result, important policy papers are compiled hurriedly (e.g., pension reforms), leaving little room for consultations. In most cases, economists are invited to provide "technical support" for political decisions. If technocrats say what they really think, they risk losing their jobs.

In Cameroon and the Philippines, policies are influenced by electoral and political considerations only to a limited extent, but for different reasons. In Cameroon, most public decisions derive from policy measures formulated in multiannual strategy documents, sometimes drawn up using a participatory approach. This was the case, for instance, with the "Vision 2035" project for an emerging Cameroon by 2035, the pivotal reference document that contains most of the policies to be implemented over several five-year periods. In the Philippines, in contrast, strong independent institutions limit the political influence of policies. For example, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (the Philippine central bank) is an independent authority created in 1993. Its policy decisions are governed by mandates on price stability, financial stability, and efficient payments and settlements. In another example, the National Socioeconomic Planning Development Authority developed the Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022 through collaboration with other key agencies and in consultation with civil-society and non-governmental organizations and the broader public both nationally and subnationally.

The ability of locally produced knowledge to influence policies depends also upon the maturity of the polity and its engagement in policy debates to demand change. The public in Sri Lanka is not educated enough to vote based on policy issues, and the majority make voting decisions on the basis of personal benefit. Policymakers likewise focus on catering to voters' majority interests rather than on broader policy issues.

## V.1 Final Remarks and Potential Responses

We have provided some novel quantitative estimates of the participation of researchers in lower-middle-income countries in economic-development-policy debates. In the international arena, we found that less than 10% of authors of World Bank and United Nations Development Programme flagship reports worked in a lower-middle-income country at the time of publication. This is disturbing because UN flagship reports are important instruments for setting policy agendas and for influencing opinions and preferences (Vladimirova & Le Blanc, 2016). In contrast, we found high levels of participation in reports produced by local governments and by the local United Nations Development Programme office but not in reports produced by the local World Bank office (though variations existed across countries). The qualitative evidence, however, indicated that the local individuals involved in producing government reports in some lower-middle-income countries tend to be politically aligned with the party in power or other special-interest groups, potentially reducing the quality and integrity of their participation.

The situation is unsatisfactory to the extent that development policies are formulated with little attention to scientific evidence, and scientific research is created only partially in response to policy needs. We argue that investing in the development of local research capacity, along with taking advantage of local researchers' networks and access to information, can bridge the gap between policy and research.

Our evidence suggests that promoting local researchers helps foster evidence-based policymaking, and we therefore conclude with possible solutions to local researchers' lack of participation in development-policy debates. This is not meant to be a comprehensive discussion but is rather intended to be constructive and to increase the inclusion of the voices and local knowledge of southern researchers in the policy process. Potential solutions span five major groups: civil service, civil society, local researchers, international organizations, and political leaders. Some of these reforms are minor while others would require deep institutional change.

### 5.1! International Organizations

In producing development policy reports, international organizations should increase the participation of researchers who actually work in lower-middle-income countries because of the added value they provide. International experts possess knowledge from a range of countries and often have better statistical skills, but locals understand local contexts. That advantage means that partnerships among international and local experts are a good option for producing relevant and insightful reports.

International organizations should also attempt to level the playing field. As one example, researchers in lower-middle-income countries usually do not have access to the same information and databases that are available to members of international agencies in high-income countries, even when the data refer to their own countries. Though this situation

may be changing, local researchers still face barriers to obtaining information. In comparison, research by international agencies benefits from access to data from all over the world.

International organizations sometimes emphasize academic rigor but focus less on policy relevance—even when the product is a policy document. In part, this explains the lack of demand for local researchers. The high turnover among international experts is another difficulty: they take time to learn the country context but leave before they can make use of the knowledge they have gained. In fragile states that lack local researchers, turnover is particularly disadvantageous. The International Monetary Fund institutional guidelines are a related problem that impedes the capacity of the International Monetary Fund officials to adjust policies to suit country contexts.

## **5.2! Civil Service**

Developing countries should have a professional civil service, and a Weberian-style bureaucracy appears to be a promising solution. A meritocratic civil service with highly qualified public employees would have an incentive to draft and issue public policies that incorporate scientific research produced both locally and internationally. Professionals with technocratic credentials are more likely to consult researchers when drafting public policies. In some developing countries, such as Argentina, the laws regulating public employment are reasonable, but the bureaucracy is far from ideal because the law is not reliably implemented.

## **5.3! Engagement of Civil Society in Government**

“Engagement” refers to institutional reforms that indirectly produce higher participation among local researchers and a greater use of local knowledge in making public policy. In the public sector, independent boards staffed by members of civil society are one example. Such bodies could have power over fiscal policy to help avoid procyclic policies (Frankel, 2011) or over social programs to improve targeting and avoid a clientelistic use of public funds. A related solution would be the creation of structures that bring scientific advice into certain areas of public decision-making, provided that an obligation to involve a substantial amount of local knowledge is part of the process. More generally, an educated civil society is presumably more likely to demand higher-quality policies. Both Sri Lankan policymakers emphasized this point, arguing that their country faces a problem of poor public awareness.

## **5.4! Local Researchers**

Researchers generally emphasize academic rigor over policy impact. In many cases, their language is overly technical and too difficult for policymakers to interpret. In other cases, researchers’ reports provide high-quality descriptions of a problem but do not introduce potential solutions. Use of higher-impact communication tools could help. More generally,



researchers interested in influencing policies should respond to questions that are relevant to policymakers rather than to those that are of interest to journal editors. Researchers working in lower-middle-income countries should attempt to improve networking, which is a critical factor. One example of an effort to improve networking is PEP. Another example is the African Migration, Mobility, and Displacement research network, an interactive platform funded by European institutions that provides access to Africa-based scholarship and is intended to increase the visibility of African scholars.

## **5.5! Political Leaders**

Political leaders are fundamental actors because of their influence on policy reform and implementation. Difficulties arise when political leaders use power for their own benefit rather than to promote general welfare. An obvious example is corruption, but the problem is more complex. A common situation observed in developing countries is that local researchers promote policies to foster development, but political leaders ignore their research because researchers' demands usually imply expenditures in the short run while benefits only materialize in the medium or long run (investing in human capital, e.g.), which is not always electorally or politically convenient.

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## Appendix 1: National Reports

### Cameroon

The last edition of the World Bank Systematic Country Diagnosis for Cameroon dates to 2016. Local researchers represented 32.5% of the forty main contributors to the drafting of this report (excluding administrative assistants), most of whom were staff of the World Bank in the country; only a few were consultants from outside the bank. On the contrary, concerning the United Nations Development Programme national report on human development in Cameroon, we noted a significant contribution from locals. In the most recent edition (2013), nine of the ten main contributors were local. Moreover, more than half of these local contributors were academics. United Nations Development Programme contributors represented 30% of the whole, including its Cameroonian staff. This significant local participation was the result of the United Nations Development Programme's approach to drafting national human development reports, which involves collaborating with a government body for the publication of the report and adopting a participatory approach. In the case of Cameroon, the United Nations Development Programme co-produced the report in collaboration with the Ministry of Economy, Planning, and Territorial Management. The drafting process included discussions with representatives of various ministries, the private sector, and civil society, but also with representatives of Cameroon's technical and financial partners such as the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund, the African Development Bank, and the European Union.

The Cameroon government's main national report is drawn up jointly with the budget bill for the subsequent year. This systematic report presents the economic and financial facts that marked the world economy during the closing year; the national situation in economic, social and financial matters; and the macroeconomic and budgetary outlook. This report is written entirely by employees from various public administrations, particularly the ministries of finance and the economy, and the significance and influence of the policies advocated by international institutions are often very strong. For instance, the structural and institutional reforms set out in the 2020 edition of this report fall mainly within the framework of the implementation of programs supported by the International Monetary Fund and by Cameroon's other technical and financial partners such as the World Bank, the European Union, and the French Development Agency.

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## The Philippines

One third of contributors to the World Bank Systematic Country Diagnosis reports are southern researchers—this a unique characteristic of banks in protecting their interests. Major, publicly disseminated reports are drafted by experts regardless of residency or country of birth who are strictly contracted to observe institutional guidelines and bank regulations. Conversely, local researchers usually write the National Human Development Report and government reports.

In matters of influence, however, government reports drafted by residents have a high level of influence in policy design and implementation. This is in contrast to the local United Nations Development Programme report or the World Bank Systematic Country Diagnosis, both of which have a minimal to moderate influence on policy design and implementation.

## Sri Lanka

The 2014 World Bank Systematic Country Diagnosis study was the first report done on Sri Lanka. Very few local authors fully participate in compiling the report. In fact, interviews with local authors indicated they were mainly involved in producing background analyses.

Conversely, national United Nations Development Programme reports are usually produced by teams of local authors who are guided by a steering committee of local experts and representatives of the United Nations Development Programme. Editorial tasks are generally carried out by non-locals. In the case of the 2014 National Human Development Report and the 2014 World Bank Systematic Country Diagnosis report, the policy-influencing process was disrupted by the change in government that took place in 2015. Changes in key staff at the United Nations Development Programme and World Bank country offices, meanwhile, meant that there was no push to influence policies using the knowledge created. Most of the non-nationals involved in the compilation of National Human Development Report reports are editors and consultants providing technical support. Fewer local researchers are involved in the preparation of National Human Development Report reports because non-national consultants provide technical appraisals. Technical support was needed, for example, to complete the 1998 and 2012 National Human Development Reports; the large gap between them was partly the result of secessionist conflict in the country from 1983 to 2009. As a result, both reports were reviewed by a technical editor and a language editor.

In Sri Lanka, the government produces no regular economic development reports other than the Annual Report of the Central Bank, which is produced as a statutory obligation to inform the government and the general public regarding the activities of the Central Bank and its perspectives on the economy. Other than that, development-policy documents are produced whenever a new government come into place, and they largely mirror the election manifestos of the elected party. These usually hurried documents are apparently written by local researchers though they rarely provide author information.

## Argentina

Local United Nations Development Programme national reports for Argentina rely heavily on researchers at local universities. On the contrary, in-country World Bank employees write the World Bank Systematic Country Diagnosis.

Arguably, the most important report written by a public institution in Argentina is the State of the Nation annual report. This heavily politicized report is written by members of the current administration to describe and defend the previous year's policies and is presented at the inauguration of legislative sessions. Contributors generally work in Argentina at the time of publication, and independent researchers have little or no participation. In Argentina, the most important debates about future policies are usually informal and are controlled by political appointees and lobbies, not researchers.

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## Appendix 2: Survey of Development Economics Researchers in Lower-Middle-Income Countries

We sent emails to researchers working in developing countries asking them to complete the following online survey.

Dear [Name]: I hope this e-mail finds you well. I am contacting you as you have been identified as a high-level economic policy researcher in your country. A team of Research Fellows from the Partnership for Economic Policy (PEP) are interviewing economic policy experts in Africa, Asia and Latin America --as yourself—to better understand the involvement of local researchers in the production of economic policy reports. I hope you can support us by responding to the following survey online.

1: On a scale from 1 to 5, where five is very high, What is the influence of the following policy reports on actual policy design and implementation in your country?

Type of Report	Influence (1 to 5)
National reports by Government	
National reports by Local United Nations Development Programme or World Bank	
Regional reports written by [Regional Development Bank]	
International flagship reports by the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, United Nations Development Programme	

2: In your assessment, who [local vs. international] are the principal authors of the following policy reports?

Type of Report	Exclusively local	Mostly local	Mostly international	Exclusively international	Do not know
National reports by Government					
National reports by Local United Nations Development Programme or World Bank					
Regional reports written by Regional Development Bank					
International flagship reports by the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, United Nations Development Programme					

3.1 - What are the main barriers to enhance the participation of national/local researchers in the production of NATIONAL reports written by the GOVERNMENT of your country?

3.2 - What are the main barriers to enhance the participation of national/local researchers in the production of NATIONAL reports written by the LOCAL World Bank or local United Nations Development Programme office?

3.3 - What are the main barriers to enhance the participation of national/local researchers in the production of INTERNATIONAL and REGIONAL reports written by agencies such as the International Monetary Fund, United Nations Development Programme, World Bank.

Institutional Affiliation:

Country of Residence:

Education (highest degree):!

!



## Appendix 3: Interviews with Policymakers in lower-middle-income countries

We interview high-ranking policymakers in Argentina, Cameroon, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka. The interviews were semi-structured following this form:

Dear [Name]: I am part of a team of Partnership for Economic Policy (PEP) Research Fellows from developing countries who are interviewing high-ranking policymakers like yourself in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, to learn about how research affects policies, and notably the contribution of local knowledge and expertise. Think about the major policies that you implemented.

1. To what extent were those policies influenced by electoral and political considerations? (very little, to some extent, a lot) Please elaborate:

2. To what extent were those policies influenced by International Reports (the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, United Nations Development Programme)? Please elaborate:

3. To what extent were those policies influenced by Regional Reports (Regional Development Bank)? Please elaborate:

4. To what extent were those policies influenced by government-produced reports (such as those produced by [AGENCY] or by other local institutions)? Please elaborate:

5. To what extent were those policies influenced by national reports produced by local offices of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, or think tanks? Please elaborate:

Let us now focus on your agency's national report:

6. To what extent does it take into consideration local knowledge?

7. Who writes the reports?

8. Approximately what share of the local individuals who write the reports have master's or PhD degrees?

9. Do you consider that local individuals mainly follow the advice of international development experts, or do they include their locally acquired knowledge?

10. On a scale from 1 to 10, where 10 is the maximum, how much influence does the locally produced knowledge have during the following stages of the report? Selection of topic, literature review, fieldwork, data analysis, policy recommendations, dissemination.

11. Overall, do you consider that local researchers should have more influence on policymaking?

12. If yes, can you think of any solution to improve this situation?

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## Appendix 4: Survey of Participants in Local United Nations Development Programme Reports

We interviewed individuals who participated as editors or authors of local United Nations Development Programme national human development reports in Argentina, Cameroon, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka. The interviews were semi-structured following this form:

Dear [Name]: I am part of a team of Partnership for Economic Policy (PEP) Research Fellows from developing countries who are interviewing development experts as yourself. We are interested in assessing the use of local knowledge in the production of economic policy reports. Let me focus on report [name and year of publication] for which you were the editor/author.
Questions to Editors
1. How do you consider was the use of local knowledge during the research conceptualization stage? Please describe.
2. How did you consider the engagement of local researchers in the research report? Please describe.
3. How did you consider the involvement of local researchers in disseminating the research/report? Please describe.
4. How did you consider the influence of local researchers in setting the policy recommendations of the report? Please describe.
5. What were your main challenges in engaging with local researchers?
6. Can you think of any solution to increase the use of local knowledge and participation of local researchers?
7. In your opinion, how influential in terms of actual policy implementation was the report?
Questions to Authors
Please describe your involvement in the above report at different levels:
1. Conceptualization of the report
2. How did you choose a theme for the report?
3. Data
4. Research/production team
6. Different views
7. Local political economy
8. How did you get involved as an author?
9. Can you think of any solution to increase the use of local knowledge and participation of local researchers?
10. In your opinion, how influential in terms of actual policy implementation was the report?

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## Appendix 5

### Surveys of Local Researchers, Number of Responses by Country

<b>Region</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Freq.</b>
AF	Benin	2
AF	Burkina Faso	1
AF	Cameroon	3
AF	Ethiopia	1
AF	Ivory Coast	1
AF	Kenya	1
AF	Malawi	1
AF	Nigeria	2
AF	Senegal	2
AF	Uganda	2
AF	Zambia	7
AS	Afghanistan	1
AS	Bangladesh	3
AS	India	4
AS	Indonesia	2
AS	Lao PDR	2
AS	Malaysia	4
AS	Myanmar	1
AS	Nepal	5
AS	Pakistan	2
AS	The Philippines	10
AS	Singapore	1
AS	Sri Lanka	5
AS	Thailand	2
AS	Vietnam	3
LAC	Argentina	5
LAC	Brazil	4
LAC	Chile	2
LAC	Colombia	1
LAC	Ecuador	3
LAC	El Salvador	2
LAC	Mexico	2
LAC	Nicaragua	2
LAC	Uruguay	1

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