



RESEARCH CAPACITY OF RELATIVELY SMALL COUNTRIES IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

South America Country Group Report (Bolivia, Ecuador and Paraguay)

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1 Country Group Overview

The sub selection of countries in South America includes Bolivia, Ecuador and Paraguay. These three countries share various characteristics. Excluding Guyana, French Guyana and Suriname, these three countries are the smallest. Only Uruguay is smaller in size and population. The selected countries also have generally poorer development indicators than the rest of the region, and have multicultural populations.

Table 1 summarizes some of the key indicators on population, public spending on the social sectors and some key outcomes. All the countries are under the 15% of GDP in social expenditure benchmark for high spenders in the region. In addition, as spending per capita, these countries are among the lowest. In the region by 2013, social spending reached an average of USD 1155 per person while Bolivia does not reach USD 200 and Ecuador and Paraguay are still under USD 500 per person. This limits the capacity of the state to carryout policies for improvements in social outcomes.

Table 1. Summary of Country Indicators

	Bolivia	Ecuador	Paraguay
Population	11 million	16 million	7 million
Poverty Rate	36.3%	33.6%	40.7%
Inequality (Gini Coefficient)	0.47	0.48	0.52
Education Spending % of GDP	6.4%	4.4%	5%
Health Spending as % of GDP	6.1%	7.5%	9%
Elementary School Enrolment	81.6%	95%	81.9%
Secondary School Enrolment	71.6%	83.5%	62.6%
Infant Mortality (per 1000 children born alive)	30.6	18.4	17.5

Source: CEPAL Country Profiles (2015)

The sub-selection of countries, like the rest of the region, show a long term trend for pro cyclical spending on the social sectors. The countries have been able to increase spending during the years of high commodity prices, but now are facing a slowdown in social spending. While many countries were able to put forward counter cyclical policies in the crisis of 2009, the scenario for 2015 and onward is not as favourable as the changes seem more long term than in the previous period.

In this context, the countries in the region face the specific challenge of turning their social investments into highly efficient and effective programs. It is important to note that the slowdown of the economies will not only affect the general fiscal space for social spending in the region, but will also affect the income of the poorest households. Indirectly this will also affect social outcomes by forcing children and the youth into the labour market for subsistence or lowering out-of-pocket spending on health and nutrition. To explore how policy research activities can support countries in facing these challenges, this diagnosis focuses on exploring the production of research, its demand, and the main research priorities for each country.

2 Methodology

This diagnosis is based on a survey and a set of interviews based on a roster of researchers, research managers and policymakers in the three countries. To develop this roster, three activities were carried out: i) identification of key literature of health and education spending to identify authors and institutional affiliations, 2) review official websites in each government and 3) review lists of institutions available from donors and similar sources. With this, a roster of 120 individuals was prepared (Annex 1). All these identified persons were contacted and invited to participate in the survey. The respondents of the survey were as followed.

Ecuador – 21
Paraguay – 27
Bolivia – 15

In this process, they were all invited to participate on a skype interview (Bolivia and Paraguay) or face-to-face interview (Ecuador). From this process, 14 interviews were carried out.

3 Findings

This sections summarizes the main findings of the research process carried out in the following structure. First, it does an overarching analysis of the production of research. It analyses the research capacities of researchers and research organizations in terms of policy research and policy influence or engagement as well as their perceived needs for capacity gaps. This section also includes a summary of key institutions identified in each country. The second section focuses on the use of research and its main constraints, as well as the identification of key policy institutions that could support the use of research for policy. Finally, the third section summarizes the policy research priorities identified in this project though the survey and interviews.

3.1 Production of Research

3.1.1 Overview of Research Capacities

Latin America lags behind other regions in relation to the amount of researchers, the budgets allocated for research and the publications in international journals. This section presents the summary of the key indicators of science for the country group.

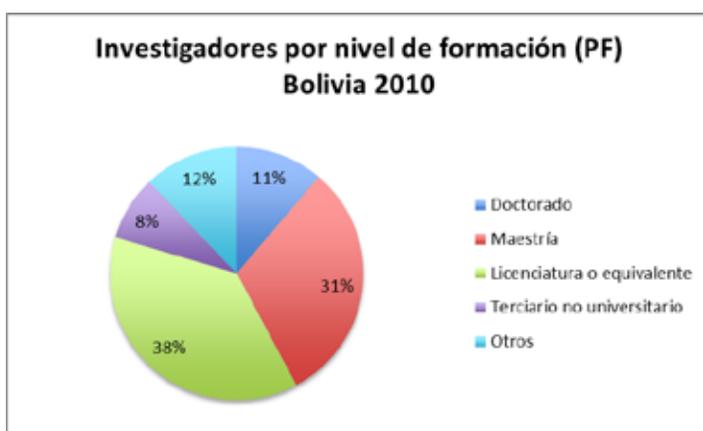
The sub-selection of countries has a low proportion of researchers in relation to its economically active population (Table #). They all have less than 1 researcher per 1000 workers, with Paraguay having the least (as of 2012) followed by Bolivia (as of 2010) and then by Ecuador (as of 2011). These three countries indicators are significant lower than other countries with better established research systems such as Argentina (3.02) or Brazil (1.48).

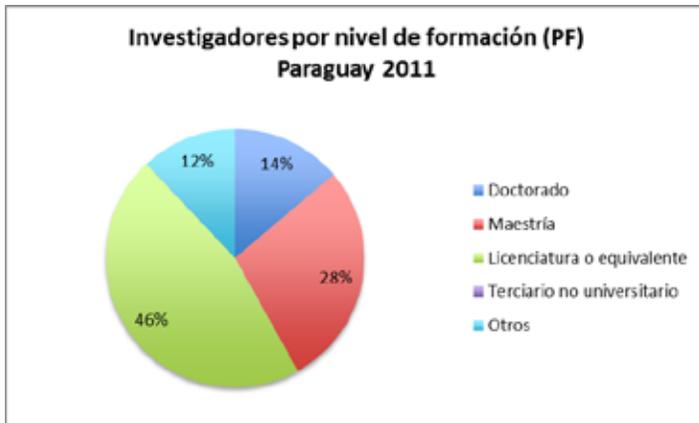
Table 2. Full time researchers per 1000 workers

Researchers per 1000 of EAP (EJC)	
Bolivia	0,35
Ecuador	0,42
Paraguay	0,34
Argentina	3,02
Brazil	1,48

In terms of the level of education attained by researchers, the majority has still only reaches a bachelor degree, then masters programs, and between 11% and 14% have a doctorate degree. This is again substantially lower than other better established countries, like Chile where 46% of researchers hold a doctorate degree.

Figure 1. Researchers by level of education

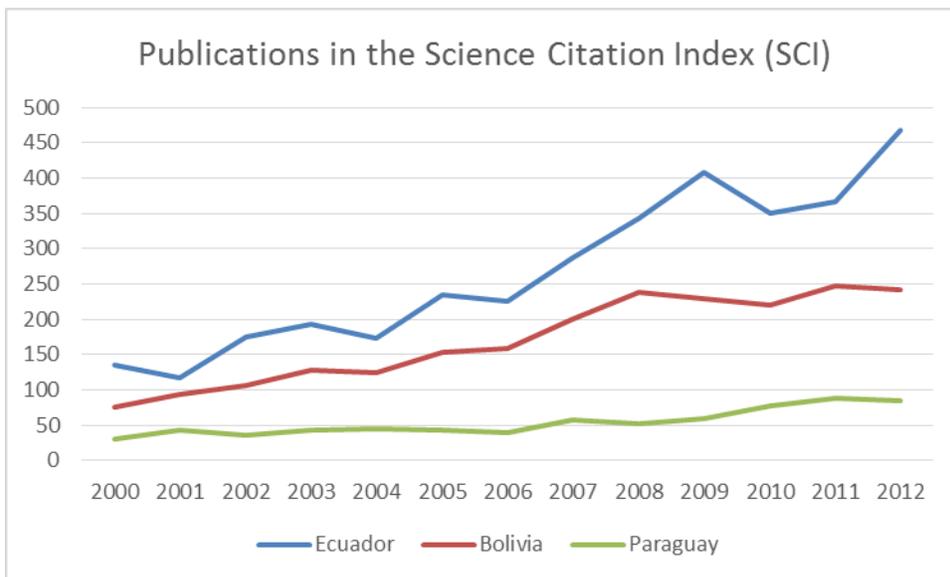




In terms of investment in all activities of science and technology, the three countries are also below the regional average of 0.74% of GDP: Ecuador invests 0.4%, Paraguay invests 0.35%, and Bolivia invests 0.2%. It is important to note that the researchers in the three countries that participated in the interviews commented that public funding available for research is mostly focused in the STEM fields, and not the social sciences.

From this low capacity emerges also a significantly low production of science that gets published in journals recognized in international indexes such as the Science Citation Index (SCI). The production is much lower than other countries, and the productivity for each researcher is also low.

Figure 2. Publications in the Science Citation Index



This general overview shows that the three countries face the challenge of low investment and capacity for research. Although, as will be discussed in following sections, some specific researchers and research centres have emerged, the knowledge systems of these countries is for the most part weak.

3.1.2 Researchers' experience and expectations

Based on this broad setting of the knowledge system of the three countries, this section focuses on the researchers that participated in the survey (33 researchers participated). From these researchers, it is worth noting that most of them are female and under 40 years old. Most researchers are in the areas of economics (44%) and education (30%). With a smaller proportion in other specific areas. The majority are still affiliated to a university (50%) while 32% are affiliated to think tanks or research centres. In line with the training of researchers, the most common areas of work are: poverty, education, economic development, evaluations, health and public expenditure.

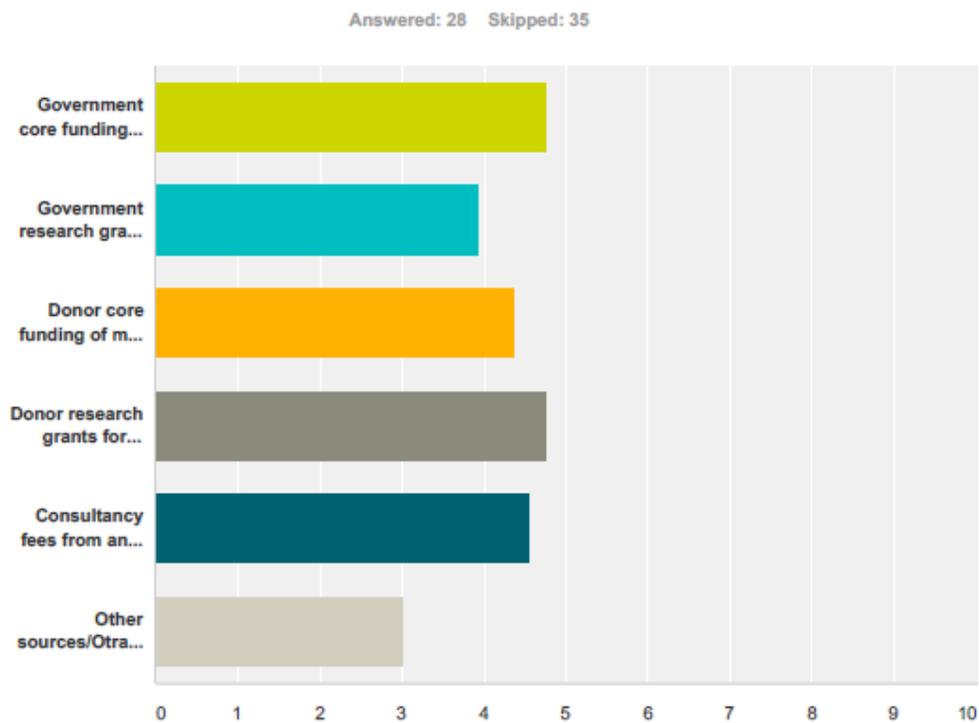
In terms of the opportunities for funding, there is no one strong source of funding among the surveyed researchers. This might also reveal the different funding mechanisms available to researchers depending on their institutional affiliations. This is complemented with these reflections from the interviews:

- An Ecuadorian researcher based at a private university noted that it is difficult for them to receive funding from international organization because of the difficulty of internal bureaucracy; or from the government due to a perception of limitation of freedom of thought from the government. Professors carry out consultancies on their free time and independently from their academic work.
- A Bolivian researcher based at a new private university research centre suggested that they are now opening a new consultancies line to finance their research. That way they receive funding for their research, supporting the government with research and data related tasks. Consultancies paid by international organizations but carried out for the government are one of the most common mechanisms. Other centres finance their main activities through international grants.

“The centre does not have core funding beyond my salary and a secretary. But with the funds from grants and consultancies we have the chance to hire recent graduates and PhD students. But these short term funding opportunities do not allow us to maintain staff in the long term”
(Interview 4)
- A Paraguayan researcher based at a new think tank mentioned that funding is primarily consultancies and international funding with little availability from government.

As said before, most researchers suggested that public funding for independent research in the social sciences is limited.

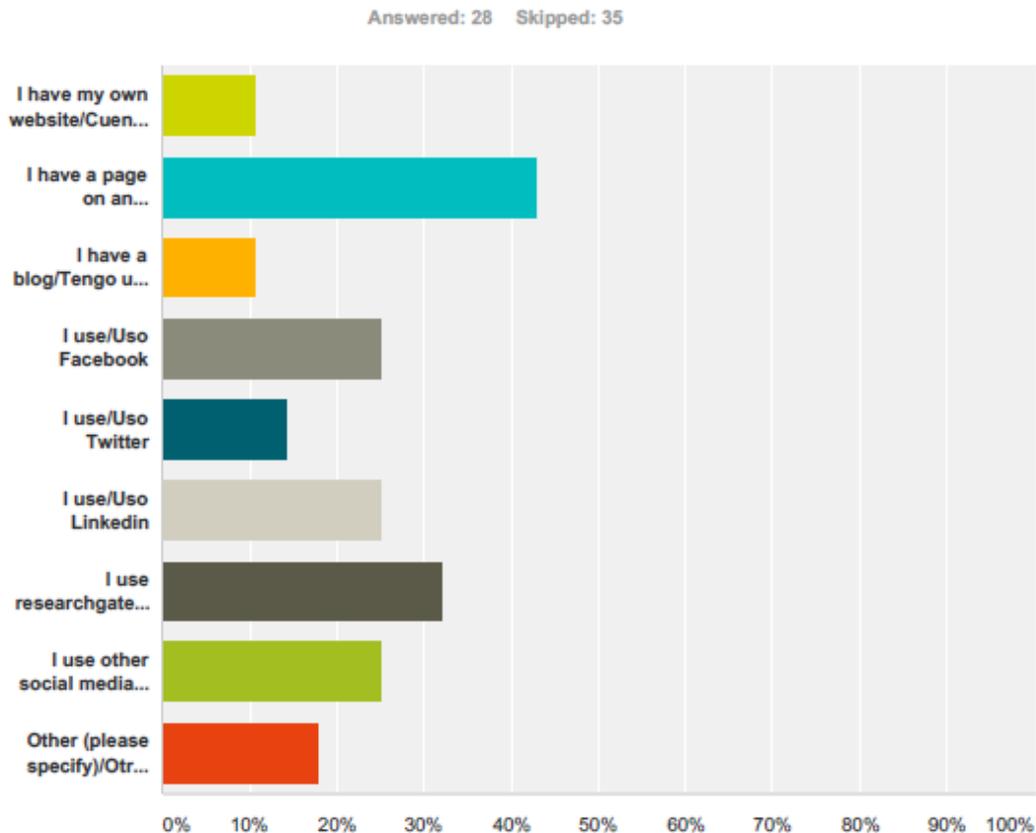
Figure 3. Rank the sources of the funding of your research projects by importance



In terms of the activities carried out to develop research capacity, it is important to note that most (75%) of the respondents have participated in research conference, and regional conferences (58%). Only 33% have received training on communication and dissemination, an activity that is considered by researchers as one of the most valuable activities for capacity building. This coincides with the findings regarding the communication strategies that researchers use. Most rely on their institutional websites (43%), or other academic sites (32%). These other strategies appeared in the process of the interview:

- Contact with journalists and the media
- Op-eds
- Partnerships and networks with other research centres

Figure 4. Do you use any of the following for communicating about your research activities?



3.1.3 Researchers perception by country

Bolivia – Researchers interviewed in Bolivia, suggested in general that the environment to carry out research on policy issues is difficult due to a lack of interest or prioritization from local officials on research. This is linked to a low capacity to produce high quality, and reliable data. It appears as if there is a growing interest of research from universities. In Bolivia an interesting finding is that there is significant collaboration between researchers based in think tanks and universities. Researchers based in both types of institutions regarded each other highly. For example the Universidad Privada de Santa Cruz de la Sierra and INESAD co-hosted the LACEA (Latin American and Caribbean Economic Association) Conference this year. The GDN Project could tap these existing networks and maximize its impact.

“In Bolivia the government does not value academic knowledge. This is an ideological position. The government knows what it wants to do, and does not need anyone to tell them what to do, how to do it or to evaluate projects. Evaluations are secretive and there is no space for critical thinking” (Interview 1).

There might be more spaces within local governments, however these have limited resources and capacities in the health and education sector.

“We work on research action, not purely abstract research. Policymakers at the local governments know that we have capacities that they do not have; that is why they contact us” (Interview 5).

Ecuador – Here researchers feel also that researching policy issues is difficult but mostly due to polarization. Researchers suggests there is no space for independent voices without retaliation, directly or indirectly from government. In general, there is a recognition of the effort to improve the quality of data, but some are sceptical about how independent data is from political manipulation. The government has strengthen its capacity to carry out research internally, and maybe have “crowded out” independent researchers.

“It is difficult to work with the government. Official channels to commission research do not work. You are not competitively hired to carry out research, it is based on personal relations” (Interview 13 – Researcher at university Ecuador)”

“It is no secret that different perspectives are not welcomed by the government” (Interview 14 – Researcher at University)

Paraguay – Researchers note that in general, there is not a culture of “evidence-based policymaking” and also low capacity to carry out research. One note exception is the Ministry of Finance that tends to have higher capacity and interest on research. Research related to policy is mostly carried out in think tanks as most university professors dedicate most of their times to teaching. There is no open opposition or limitation to freedom of thought.

All researchers note that governments support for original research is focused on STEM fields. Social Sciences are not prioritized in their funding schemes.

3.1.4 Research Organisations

In this country group, the following research organizations have been identified: i) research centres based at universities, ii) independent think tanks, iii) research units and organizations within the government. This section presents a summary of findings from interviews and surveys along with a sub-selection of centres for each country.

Like researchers, researcher managers, and others were asked to also prioritize the needs for capacity building among researchers and research centres. Joining the perspectives of both researchers and users of research can give is a complete picture of the capacity needs.

Research managers and users prioritize the need for better quality research. The two key aspects identified are: research management and research methods and publications in academic journals. The capacities for communication and engagement are not considered as critical as that of quality of research. In terms of concrete activities, this group prioritizes better formal education, linking with international conferences and debates, and gaining expertise at publishing academic journals.

As mentioned in the previous section, researchers prioritize the need for their communication skills. Interestingly, outside stakeholders identify gaps in the research capacities and skills to begin with. This difference in perception may occur because of

lack of knowledge of both communities, and also because researchers require to guard and protect their expertise. The limitations of capacities becomes clear in the following quote from a ministry level public official in Ecuador.

“In Ecuador researchers do not have their own research agendas, researchers work on what they can find funding for. How do I find expertise then? There is also no articulation between their work and policy priorities. We need to move away from pure diagnosis and ‘pobretólogos’ (negative connotation for poverty researchers). We need a new agenda that can really shed light on ‘how’. For example, we know that one of the big problems with health is the poor potable water and sewer systems. We do not need researchers to tell us that, we know it. We need them to help us identifying how to solve the issue. There are technical and political questions to be answered.” Interview 9

For public officials in general, it was difficult to identify key researchers or research centres that would work on public expenditure in social areas. When some names were given, they had just general knowledge that this centres “work on some of these issues” but no understanding of their concrete work. When asked about whether they had received communications from researchers wanting to share their findings with them, all agree that they do not receive such offers. Sometimes they receive publications.

Some of the structural issues identified in the interview process include:

- Low offer of Higher Education programs in the social sciences. Although FLACSO in the region provides higher education programs in the social sciences, it might not be enough to cover all the different needs in research.
- Role of research taken by Civil Society Organizations. The universities in the three countries are characterized by having limited capacity to carryout research. Professors devote most of their time to teaching, and to complement their salaries most also carryout other jobs. In this context, the role of research to inform policy has been absorbed by civil society organization. These organizations, however, face the challenge of unstable and limited funding, and short term objectives that do not necessarily go in line with a long term research agenda. Although some organizations are think tanks or other types of knowledge centres, these are just a small part of the CSOs as a whole.
- Practically nonexistence journals at the national levels. In Bolivia, Ecuador and Paraguay, there are really very few peer reviewed academic journals that can be the basis to qualify and organize knowledge within the countries. Many researchers publish abroad, or do not publish at all, leaving many knowledge as grey literature that later cannot be accessed and used. This causes researchers to repeat instead of expand on others research.

3.2 Research Use

This section summarized the key findings about the use of research from the survey, and some reflections from the interviews carried out. Most respondents (70%) confirm that their organizations commission research. The majority (88%) hire both national and international researchers. In terms of perceived quality, regional or international think tanks are the ones with best qualifications, followed by university researchers and local think tanks.

In the interviews carried out with policymakers they noted the following limitations for the use of research in their activities:

- Difficulty to include strategic perspective with day to day pressures. Policymakers note that they have a lot of requirements they need to fulfil and in that process many times lose a strategic perspective.

“Internally we are trying to do interesting things. We have readings and debates about research. I send my staff readings and materials, but not all have the time or dedication to read them. For example, we discussed Piketty’s Book and began thinking about new tax reforms on inheritance. But there is not enough time to do all this is your 9 to 5 job.” Interview 9

- Internal organization of knowledge in public entities is difficult. It has been identified that there is much disorganization about how public officials interact with researchers. This causes duplicity of consultancies being commissioned, and not the best use given to those that are commissioned.
- The need for prompt responses has led public organizations to carry out their own research programs instead of collaborating with others (may be specific to Ecuador).

“In this Ministry we have a lot of requests for what the evidence says. But we usually do not have the time to commission this. We have to do this in-house, which also gives the Minister more confidence” (Interview 12- Public Official Ecuador)

“Here we need to carry out consultancies because the research we need is not available out there. We need this information quickly and have no time for long research projects. We do it internally, or hire consultants. But usually these results do not become documents that are available to the public or even other institutions” (Interview 11 – Public Official Ecuador)

- Fragmentation on the knowledge system. Policymakers identify that all stakeholders work in silos is one of the difficulties. They identify that too specific and narrow support for research has limited impact.

“I see fragmentation as the key concern. Universities, think tanks, the ministry all carry out very specific and limited research, based on particular or even personal interests. There is no planning of the real fallacies of the Health Sector” (Interview 7 – Ex public official Bolivia)

“Coordination between public institutions is another difficulty we face. When it comes to doing research that needs information from other public institutions it is almost impossible to get it. For example, you see very good research on maternal mortality, even with support from international organizations. But then, if you try to have broader data of mortality in general, this one is very unreliable. ” (Interview 11 – Public Official Ecuador)

- Government officials have insufficient power and capacities to set a meaningful research agenda. This might be changing in countries like Ecuador where there is a big push for sovereignty, but it has limited effect if capacities are not there to carry out an agenda. A government that is too strong might however also shy away researchers.

“Consider the case of HIV. There was a big boom to understand and research HIV, because there was funding available. But no one stopped and considered that Bolivians were dying because of Tuberculosis, a topic that is not sexy for donors. That is the problem, it is not clear who makes decisions of priorities” (Interview 7 – Ex public official Bolivia)

3.3 Perceptions on Research Priorities

3.3.1 Bolivia

Relevance of Public Expenditure in Health and Education – Health and Education are key topics for the many of the researchers that participated in the survey. Two also prioritized the issues of public resources and effectiveness as well as the taxing system.

In the interviews, the issue of both health and education appeared beyond the public expenditure. For example, a researcher mentioned the importance of environmental aspects that impact the quality of health in the case of the rural sectors. In the aspect of education, the dimension of quality beyond just access appeared as critical. The interviewed researchers did not identify concrete research questions on the issue of public expenditure and social services, but noted its importance. This is why, when planning a research agenda on the priorities of the GDN program, these can be part of crosscutting themes.

Other relevant topics – Other critical aspects for the respondents of the survey include: poverty and inequality, natural resource management (from an economic, social and environmental perspective – Bolivia has gas and mining)

3.3.2 Ecuador

Relevance of Public Expenditure in Health and Education – Although the topics of health and education independently are less predominant among the researchers in Ecuador compared to Bolivia, it is worth noting that the issues of the impact of public policies, impact evaluations, and public finance appear more predominantly. This may be due to the observed increased budget in social sectors such as health and education during the current government (2007-2016). This increase in social expenditure, however, might suffer significant cuts given the reduction in the price in oil and the high dependence of the budget on oil revenue. In fact, it is expected that the budget for 2016 will be 18% lower than in 2015. Given these changes, researchers coincide in the need of understanding better how to effectively utilize the resources in a scenario of fiscal constraints.

- **Last mile of services.** Ecuador has significantly increased social spending, and coverage of key social services. However, interviews carried out with policymakers suggest that central government officials have little knowledge about how the “last mile” of service is working. This means that they do not know if the service is really being provided, especially in distant, hard to reach places, the quality of the services and the bottlenecks that the staff face at this level. For example, although there was a high investment on medicines, there are various locations where users have not received them, but the central government does not understand why.
- **Coordination within the government.** The Ecuadorian government has designed new instances of coordination, such as the Coordinating Ministry. The Social Development Coordinating Ministry has the role of harmonising social services among the different ministries. In practice, this function still does not work well, and sectorial ministries tend to duplicate efforts and overlap in their activities. Coordination was identified by policymakers as a key mechanisms for efficiency and effectiveness.
- **Decentralization and de-concentration.** Health and education services are centralized in Ecuador, but they are now being de-concentrating, meaning that while still managed by the central government, local level offices have more power in decision making. In some specific aspects, such as medical and education infrastructure, local governments do play a role. However, there is no clarity of these roles, and how to better maximize the involvement of these institutions.
- **Administrative information.** In order to have better data, and make better decisions, policymakers identified the need for better administrative information from the services they provide. So far the central government depends mostly on data collected through household surveys and the social registry (for cash transfers). However, the government is expected to reduce the budget on surveys and rely more heavily on administrative data but have not yet devised a plan on how to implement this idea.

Other relevant topics – Other relevant topics that appear in the responses of the survey include, poverty and inequality, economic transformation and employment, natural resource management (Ecuador has oil and mining projects).

3.3.3 Paraguay

Relevance of Public Expenditure in Health and Education – Paraguay had the least respondents to this question on the survey, and no researcher participated in the interviews. For this reason, it is hard to grasp the relevance of the issues. However, health and education are broadly mentioned as priorities, as well as analysis of public expenditure and impact evaluations.

Other relevant topics – Other relevant topics mentioned in the survey include: poverty and inequality, social protection, and economic development.

4 Conclusions

This diagnosis has focused on giving an overview of the research panorama in Bolivia, Ecuador and Paraguay. Although the three countries share some similarities, there are also some specific traits of each one. For this reason, this section is divided into general recommendations and then a final conclusion for each country.

4.1 General conclusions and recommendations

The evidence gathered for this report shows how, developing and then using research to inform policy is a difficult task, that is further hindered by specific factors of the development and political setting of the sub-selection of countries. A programme meant to support research with the capacity to inform policy may take into consideration the following points that emerge as reflections from the research carried out along with the consultants experience carrying out call for research in the region.

- **Spaces for engagements between policymakers and researchers appear to be limited in the three countries.** The interviews with users and producers of research portray a lack of engagement and understanding of each other's needs and capacities. In the interviews, both communities acknowledge that donors can play a brokerage role, by connecting and facilitating dialogue on a research topic. The IDB was mentioned as one facilitator of this dialogue on specific occasions. These links, however, are occasional, and based on specific consultancy jobs, and do not focus on the goal of developing a research agenda with a long term perspective. GDN has a different mandate and priorities to those of other donors that have specific development outcomes in mind. This might allow it to play a different role that goes beyond consultancy work and towards more long term collaboration.
- **Developing relevant research agendas can be a long term impact of an initiative that support research to inform policy.** Although not originally considered in the programme, there could be a focus on the development of a research agenda for the sub-selection of countries which joins the priorities and interests of policymakers and researchers. This research agenda can have a longer term impact than a specific knowledge product developed in the programme.
- **Researchers will face difficulty identifying critical bottlenecks and research questions for policy relevant research.** The survey carried out brought out some general research priorities. However, in the interviews carried out, the researchers had difficulty clearly identifying policy relevant specific questions. Most stayed at a very broad level, and did not convey the clarity required to select policy relevant research questions. This must be taken into account in the process of the call for proposals, as researchers might not base their questions on concrete needs. Without a strong selection of questions, the capacity of researchers to inform policy will be limited from the onset.
- **Type of research organizations/researchers to be supported.** The programme will have to decide on the type of research institution to support. Here are some preliminary findings from the different types of organizations that can guide this decision.
 - o **Independent think tanks.** In the selected countries, there are independent think tanks, most of them registered as non-profit

organizations. These centres have gained experience and expertise on developing research for policy. Among these are grantees of the Think Tank Initiative. Although most of these centres have limited core funding for their activities, they are better at attracting international funding than the other categories.

- **University based centres.** Centres based at universities are starting to flourish in these countries, especially in Bolivia. The support given by a university might give them some basic continuity but they still rely on external funding for their main research activities. These centres are a mechanism to promote research in universities that have been highly focused on training.
- **University researchers.** Individual university researchers and professors seem to be in the most unstable condition. Without funding for their research activities, and with high level of commitment in giving classes, these researchers produce little research and are dependent on university funding for these activities. In most countries these researchers could apply for government grants, but these focus on the STEM subsectors mostly.
- **Fostering collaboration among researchers and research centres at country level.** As described in the previous point, each type of organization has its strengths and weaknesses. In this scenario the programme may choose to support proposals that show synergies by these different types of organizations, with the aim of having a longer term impact on the way research is produced and used in the selected countries.
- **Capacity development must focus on the process of research design and communication equally.** To inform the capacity development strategy of the programme, this diagnosis has identified that the perceptions of researchers and users of research on the capacity gaps are different. For example, researchers prioritize developing their communication skills, while users of research believed that researchers needed to improve their methods and analytical skills. A capacity development strategy should take into consideration these different dimensions.
 - **Research design.** As previously identified, the interviewed researchers were unable to convey research questions grounded on policy needs. This suggests that the researchers may find the support on designing research projects, identifying research questions, and linking them to policy issues useful. Researchers may believe that their formal qualifications are enough to carry-out research activities, but the surveys and interviews portray a different story.
 - **Communication and policy engagement.** If the capacity of researchers to design better research projects is tackled, then the communications aspect of the project may follow more easily. From previous experience, developing capacity only at the communication stage has limited impact on what researchers can do. The communications dimension of the project must be designed from the onset of research design, and not only as a later activity.
 - **Sustainability.** As discussed in the diagnosis, there are no long term research agendas, this is why researchers should also be inspired to debate how they can maintain their work beyond this project in the future, by finding new funding, building alliances, etc. This can further increase the impact of the programme.

- **Strategic collaborations with other donors/agencies can increase the policy relevance of the program.** GDN has the difficulty of a lack of regional presence for the management of the programme. Collaborating with international agencies that have a line of work on this issue might help solve this gap.
 - o **UNICEF.** UNICEF has a line of work on social spending that is active at the three countries. They have shown interest in collaborating with GDN, as they already support research and policy on this topic. Besides coordination at the national level, regional coordination is also feasible.
 - o **GIZ.** GIZ has supported public finance reform in the region before, although their agendas might be changing, it is another partner worth contacting and exploring.
- **Exploring the possibility to embed the programme in existing initiatives.** This diagnosis has identified some windows of opportunity to embed the research programme into an existing initiative, such as the research programme for the Strategy of the Eradication of Poverty in Ecuador. GDN, or the national partner organizations should seek out how to identify these opportunities. Linking with these existing spaces may increase the impact of the programme on policy debates.
- **Peer Learning.** If the countries selected in this country groups are selected, the GDN could benefit from the experience of the Think Tank Initiative that has supported think tanks in these three countries. The Initiative has two programme officers in the region with in depth knowledge of each country.

4.2 Country specific conclusions and recommendations

Bolivia

The distinctive feature of the Bolivian analysis has been the high level of collaboration that exists between research centres. This is a unique characteristic, as most of the identified centres were able to talk about each other's work, and have collaborated in the past. This is an important characteristic to take advantage, given the fact that the interest from the government on research seems to be low but not necessarily antagonist. The GDN programme could make the most import supporting existing collaborations.

Ecuador

In Ecuador the government presents two contradictory approaches. On the one hand, it limits all non-government involvement in policymaking. On the other hand, it has invested significantly on scholarships and research funding, primarily in the STEM areas. In this context, there might be underutilized capacities within universities primarily that do not have the incentives and spaces to engage in policy debates. Civil Society Organizations are in a precarious state, as most of them have lost staff, funding, and many have even been closed down. Given this context, the GDN program could make the most impact supporting university based centres or researchers. These centres will also be more likely to receive non-objection from the Government.

Paraguay

In the surveys, this is the country with the highest level of participation. However, when it came to the interviews, their participation was very low. This may suggest that there is significant interest on the topic, but maybe not enough capacity to tackle it. In this context, the GDN programme may find it more viable to support one of the identified independent think tanks that already have a record on policy research. Interviews suggest that there is no strong opposition to these types of organizations from the government.