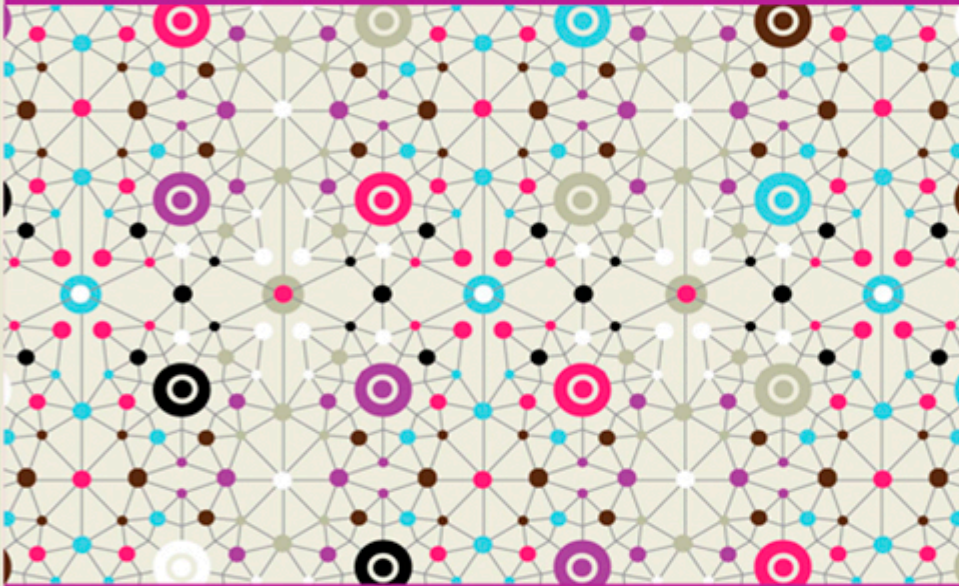


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Lessons learned and challenges in the Policy influence potential of impact evaluations in Latin America



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VIPPAL

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1. Introduction¹

The results and findings of impact evaluations can support critical evidence for innovating design, planning and implementation of public policies and thus create substantial changes that improve people's life. However, these studies do not always seek responses to questions that are relevant for program managers and their recommendations do not always reach decision makers in an effective and practical manner.

In recent years, Latin America has seen an increase in the use of diverse methodologies of impact evaluation for the analysis of the effects of state and non-state interventions upon people's life, to improve the performance of governmental or social programs and projects and in some cases, for decision making in matters of development policy.

Many governmental actors, such as the Directorate of Budget (DIPRES) in Chile, the SINERGIA Monitoring and Evaluation System in Colombia, the National Commission of Evaluation (CONEVAL) in Mexico, cooperation agencies such as the International Development Research Center of Canada (IDRC); intergovernmental agencies such as the World Bank (WB), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF) and civil society organizations such as the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie), the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action (J-Pal), and universities and research centers continue to have a role in supporting the use of rigorous evaluation methodologies, strengthening capacities of researchers, public officials, and politicians and the effective and efficient use of results and findings from these studies.

At the same time, research teams or organizations in charge of implementing impact evaluations assume greater challenges in relation to the necessary dialogue between evidence and decision-making that can lead to changes in policy. In this, they have taken and continue to assume a leading role through the implementation of effective and innovative policy influence strategies that are able to capture the attention and trigger the action of decision makers in the field of public policies.

Therefore, it is valid to ask, "Are researchers being able to influence policy with the findings and recommendations produced by impact evaluations conducted in Latin America? What are the policy influence strategies that the researchers utilize? How do they use them and how do they work? What are the challenges and opportunities that research teams face in establishing an effective dialogue with policy makers? What is the role of institutional development in the field of evaluation in Latin American countries and how does it affect the policy influence capacity of research teams?"

This document intends to reflect on the practice and systematize some of the lessons learned in the field of policy influence of impact evaluations in the region to help us respond to some of these questions.

This document was developed on the basis of joint and bilateral dialogues that were established between researchers, think tanks, donors and institutions of international cooperation that work in Latin America (see Appendix). The International Development Research Center of Canada (IDRC) commissioned this document to the Center for Implementation of Public Policies Promoting Equity and Growth (CIPPEC). For its elaboration the authors counted with collaboration from the Group for the Analysis of Development (GRADE), the Center for

¹ This research was conducted with the support of the International Development Research Center (IDRC) of Canada.

Distributive, Labor and Social Studies (CEDLAS) of the *Universidad Nacional de la Plata* in Argentina and the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie).

The impact evaluations that were used as the basis for the document were:

1. Impact evaluation of the program “Red Unidos” (Colombia).
2. Impact evaluation of the program “AFAM-PE” (Uruguay).
3. Impact evaluation of the non-contributory pensions program “Pensión 65” (Peru).
4. Impact evaluation of the conditional cash transfer program “JUNTOS” (Peru).
5. Evaluation of the non-contributory pensions program “Renta Dignidad” (Bolivia).
6. Impact evaluation as part of “Proyecto Capital” (Peru) and the platform “Todas Cuentan” (Chile).
7. Impact evaluation of the “Programa Piloto Promoción del Ahorro en Familias JUNTOS” (Peru).
8. Impact evaluation of the “Telenovela for Financial Education Program: Financial Telenovela (Peru) ‘Isidora la ahorradora’ and ‘Diva la Ahorrativa’ (Peru and Colombia)”.
9. Impact evaluation of the “Programa Piloto Educación Financiera del Fondo de Solidaridad e Inversión Social (FOSIS)” (Chile).
10. Impact evaluation of the Savings Pilot Program “Chile Cuenta” (Chile).

This document has three sections. The first gives a definition of impact evaluation and defines what we understand by policy influence. The second section proposes a framework of exploratory analysis to understand what are the factors that affect (negatively or positively) the policy influence potential of impact evaluations. Within said framework, the third section gathers and systematizes a number of lessons learned during different impact evaluations conducted with the support of IDRC in Latin America.

2. An approach to the policy influence perspective.

2.1. Policy influence... What policy influence?

It is always complicated to identify, capture, understand and analyze the causality of what we call policy influence. This complexity is due to a number of challenges such as the intrinsic nature of research and analysis, and the fact that the policy influence process involves multiple stakeholders with diverse interests on a matter which itself is dynamic (Lindquist, 2001).

In the context of this document, we understand policy influence as *“the ability to partially or significantly affect the processes of decision making through the introduction of new ideas or concepts, the contribution of significant data or evidence, the construction of new knowledge or the strengthening of the existing.”*

By policy influence, we are referring specifically to the capacity to affect the State as the main stakeholder, in a direct manner or through the interaction of a coalition or set of stakeholders. We are not going to concentrate on other forms of policy influence, such as those that affect a certain body of knowledge or seek to interact with the public opinion or a certain sector of it, to generate changes in attitudes or behaviors.

We follow Lindquist (1990) in identifying three types of policy influence:

1. Expand policy capacities:
 - Improve the knowledge/ data of certain actors.
 - Support public officials to develop innovative ideas.
 - Improve the capacity to communicate ideas.
 - Develop new talents for investigation and analysis.

2. Expand the policy horizons:
 - Provide opportunities to relate/learn with colleagues.
 - Introduce new concepts to frame debates, include ideas in the agenda or stimulate the public debate.
 - Educate the researchers and those who occupy new positions for them to possess a wider understanding of the issues.
 - Stimulate the dialogue between decision-makers.

3. Affect the policy regimes:
 - Modify policies or existing programs.
 - Significantly redesign policies or programs.

Thus, the adopted framework seeks to read beyond the research itself to try to understand the dynamics of decision-making processes at a national level and identify the institutional factors that regulate the production and use of impact evaluations.

2.2. Impact evaluation as reflection and action for public policy.

When we talk about impact evaluations, we think of a type of evaluation that seeks to measure the impact of public policies through the use of rigorous methodologies.

“Impact evaluations are a particular type of evaluation that seeks to answer cause-and-effect questions. Unlike general evaluations, which can answer many types of questions, impact evaluations are structured around one particular type of question: What is the impact (or causal effect) of a program on an outcome of interest? This basic question incorporates an important causal dimension: we are interested only in the impact of the program, that is, the effect on outcomes that is directly caused by its implementation. An impact evaluation looks for the changes in the outcome that are directly attributable to the program” (Gertler et al, 2007:7).

To measure the effect of a program, it is necessary to estimate a counterfactual, that is, what would have happened if the program in question were not implemented. Thus, the impact is defined as the difference in the results obtained with the program and without the program. Ideally, we would prefer to measure these results in the same individuals; however, it is impossible to measure the same people in the same moment, in two opposing realities (participating and not participating in the program). As we can only observe the individuals in one or the other situation, impact evaluations rely on different methodologies to construct valid counterfactuals (Baker, 2000; Gertler et al, 2011; Imas and Rist, 2009).

Thus, impact evaluations compare the results of the beneficiaries of the program (treatment group) with the results of the non-beneficiaries (control group). In other words, the central element of impact evaluations is the identification of the control group, since if there is a not valid estimation of this group it is impossible to measure the impact of the public policy. Different methodologies are used in the construction of control groups, which vary in the degree of internal validity and reliability of the results. The choice of one methodology over another depends on multiple factors such as the type of public policy to be evaluated, the timing of the policy cycle at the beginning of the design/implementation of the impact evaluation, the type and quality of available information, or the economic resources and the technical capacity of the evaluation team.

Impact evaluations are costly and their implementation is complex, and thus it is important to properly choose what type of intervention needs to be evaluated. In spite of the complexity associated with this type of evaluation, impact evaluations provide very important information for decision-making and transparency in management. From the literature, we find that evaluations seek different purposes:

- *Management objectives:* one of the main objectives of impact evaluations is to produce valuable information for the officials in charge of government programs. Evaluations allow us to know if the interventions are being successful or not and give feedback to the policy cycle. The information that is produced can be used, among other things, to determine the continuity of public policy and its coverage. Also, in the case of existing evaluations of similar policies, it is possible to compare the effectiveness of each of these interventions and more efficiently allocate human resources and budget. (Imas and Rist, 2009; Gertler et al, 2011).
- *Ethical and transparency objectives:* in a representative democracy, officials must give account of their actions and impact evaluations are an important way to publicize the effectiveness of public policies. *“Information and evidence become means to facilitate public awareness and promote government accountability. The information produced by monitoring and evaluation systems can be regularly shared with constituents to inform them of the performance of government programs and to build a strong foundation for transparency and accountability”* (Gertler et al, 2011: 4).

- *Educational and knowledge objectives*: the benefits of knowing whether or not a public policy works extend beyond concrete managerial benefits in so much as rigorous impact evaluations are global public goods. These studies can serve as a guide to international organizations, governments, donors and non-governmental organizations, regardless of the borders of the country where the study is conducted (Duflo and Kremer, 2013; Gertler et al, 2011).

In recent years, the development and practice of impact evaluations has expanded considerably. However, this type of study has a long history in high-income countries. In the United States, the use of impact evaluations grew considerably after the New Deal as a means to verify whether policies had the expected results in the economic development field. Since the late fifties and sixties, impact evaluations became a common component in the majority of social policies, especially in the United States and Europe (Imas and Rist, 2009). The development of evaluations in other areas of public policy is relatively new and link to the development of new methodologies and information systems.

Although there are some examples of evaluations in developing countries that date back to the seventies, the boom of impact evaluations in Latin America is much more recent. One particular evaluation is cited by the literature as a pioneer case in the region: the evaluation of the *Progres*a program (Gertler et al, 2011; Levy and Rodríguez, 2005). *Progres*a was a conditional cash transfer program implemented in the late nineties by the Mexican government which contained an important monitoring and evaluation module. The results of the evaluation, presented in 2001, showed that the program had significant, positive impacts in the field of poverty, education and health². From these results, the new government, which had recently won elections in Mexico, decided to expand the scope of the program and modify other complementary social policies that were being implemented simultaneously. In addition to having effects on Mexican policy, this evaluation had impacts in the entire region because it was used to inform other Latin American governments. After seeing the shocking results of the policy, many governments in the region designed and implemented conditional transfer programs similar to *Progres*a.

3. Defining the field: an analytic framework for the analysis of the policy influence potential of impact evaluations.

In order to highlight, explain and systematize to what extent impact evaluations manage to influence the policy cycle in Latin America, we will resort to a conceptual focus that addresses the topic from three variables: the institutional context of policy evaluation, the policy influence strategies that are considered and executed during the life of projects, and the capacities of the research teams³ to implement both the research and policy influence strategy⁴.

² "The results of the program were impressive: they showed that the program was well targeted to the poor and had engendered promising changes in households' human capital. Schultz (2004) found that the program significantly improved school enrollment, by an average of 0.7 additional years of schooling. Gertler (2004) found that the incidence of illness in children decreased by 23 percent, while adults reported a 19 percent reduction in the number of sick or disability days. Among the nutritional outcomes, Behrman and Hoddinott (2001) found that the program reduced the probability of stunting by about 1 centimeter per year for children in the critical age range of 12 to 36 months" (Gertler et al, 2011:5).

³ In this document we will talk about the research team in a broad sense, including those who are not part of the team in a direct manner but were part of the organization in which the evaluation was based. For example, a communication department or team provided to support the tasks of the principle investigators in an organization.

This approach assumes a central responsibility for research teams: the use of policy influence strategies and their implementation.

Thus, investigators assume tasks that were once outside of their core competency. These tasks are related to the permanent interaction with teams implementing the intervention being evaluated, the construction of a trusting relationship with policy-makers and the generation of innovative ideas for effective communication of the results and findings. In summary, they bring forward the results of their research.

3.1 Three years of monitoring and evaluation of the policy influence of impact evaluations: 3ie's Policy Influence Monitoring Project (PIM project).

This framework was partly constructed during the implementation of the Policy Influence Monitoring project, led and funded by 3ie between 2012 and 2014, with the support of an international consortium composed by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), Center for Poverty Analysis (CEPA), CommsConsult and CIPPEC. The project monitored and evaluated the policy influence of 100 evaluations in Latin America, Africa and Southeast Asia⁵. It was done with a mixed design that included a quantitative analysis of recollected quarterly data on policy influence processes and a qualitative analysis and systematization of the results of the policy influence strategies implemented (case studies and stories of change).

The question that guided the project was: **what factors contribute to the research teams achieving their policy influence objectives in low and middle income countries?**

The work resulted in the construction of an exploratory analytical framework that, as we mentioned, addresses the policy influence potential of evaluations from three dimensions that encompass a set of casual factors impacting their effectiveness. In total, there are 12 factors grouped into three dimensions: institutional context for policy evaluation, policy influence strategy and research team.

Five types of factors are included within the **context dimension**: national evaluation culture, characteristics of the issue being evaluated, characteristics of the evaluated intervention, characteristics of the impact evaluation at the time of the implementation of the policy influence strategy, and characteristics of the users.

1. The first factor is related to the **national capacity of evaluation** of the country where the investigation occurs. This can include the presence of an institutionalized evaluation policy (or one in development) in the administrative area, the presence of an institutionalized evaluation policy (or one in development) for the policy sector that is evaluated, the quantity of executed evaluations (with or without a legal framework) in the administrative area analyzed, and the quantity of executed evaluations (with or without a legal framework) in the policy sector.
2. The second factor is related to the **specific characteristics of the policy sector** in which the impact evaluation is carried out. That is, its relevance to the intended users of the results,

⁴ Developed in the context of the Monitoring of Public Advocacy funded by 3ie project between 2012 and 2015, implemented by ODI, CEPA, CommsConsult and CIPPEC.

⁵ The evaluations took place in: Brazil, Chile, Columbia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Zambia, Mozambique, Kenya, Ghana, Uganda, Egypt, South Africa, Malawi, Sierra Leone, China, Indonesia, Vietnam, Macedonia, Cambodia, Philippines, Bangladesh, Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka.

the profile of the evaluated sector in the policy agenda (and the media) in the specific context, the degree of consensus the theme has within interest groups and the geographic scale of the intervention (national or subnational level).

3. The third factor is related to the **specifics of the evaluated intervention**: the geographic scale of the intervention (national or subnational level), the phase of the intervention at the moment of conducting the impact evaluation, if it is a pilot program, if the implementing agency is the government, an NGO (non-governmental organization); the type of participation that the implementing agency has in the evaluation, the role of the donors/funders (if any), the role of the media and civil society in the intervention, the institutional level of the intervention (central, regional, municipal), the degree of control the program has over potential changes to its implementation, the presence of experts or stakeholders in the evaluation to make decisions or changes to the teams during the development of the plan or program.
4. The fourth factor is related to the **characteristics of the evaluation** in question regarding its development stages and availability of findings (baseline, midterm, final), the type of design used, the political timing during which it is carried out and availability of windows of opportunity, the novelty of the study or its capacity for innovation in its specific field of knowledge and the evaluation's geographic scale (national or subnational level).
5. The fifth factor is related to the **characteristics that the actual user possesses**: if it is the government in general, an NGO, the implementing agencies, the funders, the media, civil society, or an institutionalized specific level (central, regional, municipal); the degree of control that the users have over potential changes to the intervention (can they make decisions or only advocate for them?) and the presence of experts or stakeholders in the evaluation for making decisions or changes in the team during development of the plan or program.

Regarding the actual **policy influence strategy dimension**, there are seven factors that are observed here: the policy influence strategy employed, the existence of an effective commitment with interested parties, the characteristics of the findings and their dissemination as well as the characteristics of the recommendations.

6. The sixth factor is related to the **characteristics of the policy influence strategy** itself (if any). This includes awareness of the strategy's existence; allocation of a specific budget, time and people for its execution; directionality of the interactions that are carried out with the intended users (lead by the users or researchers); formats of this interaction (personal, telephone, etc.); the nature of the relationship (advisory / shared decision-making); quantity and diversity of actual users (over potential users); and use of targeted formats, languages and channels of communication for the intended users.
7. The seventh factor is the **characteristics of the engagement that is established between researchers and target users**. This includes the timing of the start of the relationship; its duration, frequency, directionality, format, type of relationship; budget available for carrying it out; allocation of time and people for its implementation; and use of different formats, languages and channels for the target users.
8. The eighth factor is the **characteristics of the findings of the evaluation**. This includes the specificity or conclusiveness of the findings, the team's perception of the specificity or

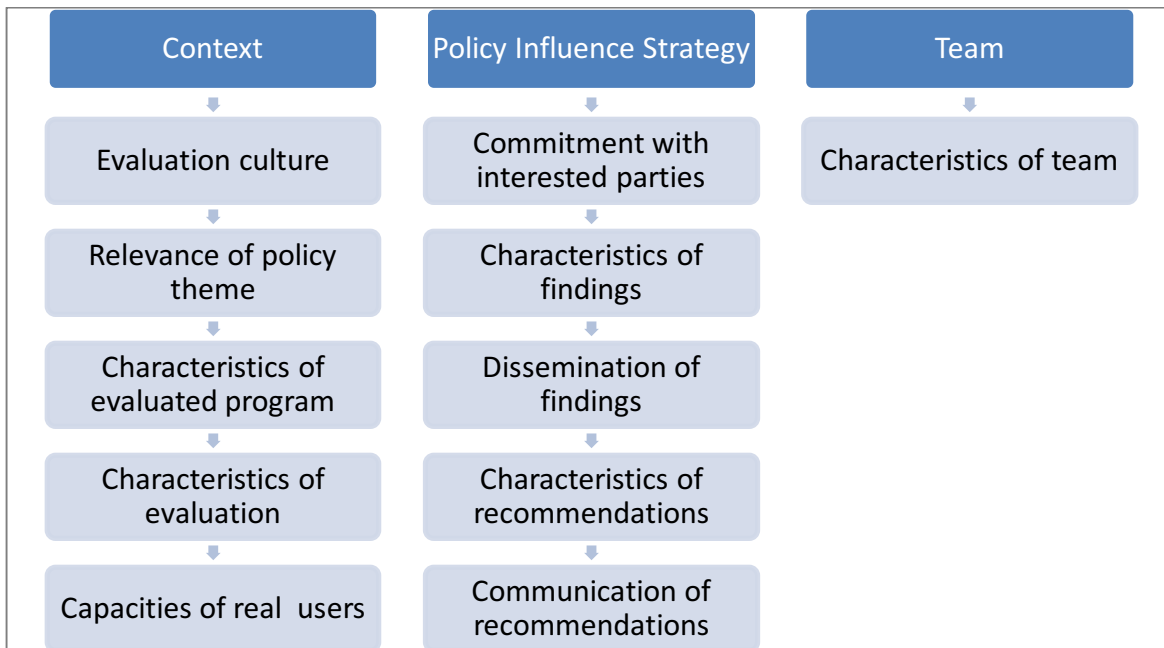
conclusiveness, the novelty or capacity of innovation and the consistency of the findings with the current orientation of policy.

9. The ninth factor is the effective **strategic communication of those findings**: effective communication includes length in words of the communication products; formats; adaptation to the local language; use of different formats, languages and channels for each target users.
- 10.
11. The tenth factor is the **characteristics of the recommendations**. This includes their clarity; specificity; practicality; viability in the given context, novelty or capacity of innovation and consistency with the current orientation of the policies/politics.
12. The eleventh factor is the effective **strategic communication of the recommendations**: quantity of communication; length in words of the communication of recommendations; formats; adaptation to the local language; use of different formats, languages and channels for each target user.

With regard to the team, its characteristics are analyzed.

13. The twelfth and last factor is the **characteristics of the research team or organization**, understood as the presence of policy influence champions or experts; the awareness and understanding they have about the national context (capacity of anticipation; networks; previous experience in the country; context analysis; adaptation of policy influence strategies); and the reputation and credibility of its members (institutional affiliation, personnel, quality of previous work).

Casual factors that affect the policy influence potential of impact evaluations



Source: CIPPEC.

3.2. The contribution of IDRC: the GRADE and CEDLAS paper.

GRADE and CEDLAS, with support from IDRC, produced a document in which they analyze the status of impact evaluations in Latin America and the Caribbean. Specifically, they studied the way in which impact evaluations are produced and utilized as tools for designing public policies in the subset of countries in the region where it's considered, a priori, that local capacities to conduct evaluations are limited.

The authors distinguish between two groups of countries: the first is composed of countries with low capacity for conducting impact evaluations: this is the central focus of the first part of their study. The second group is composed of countries in which the capacity is higher. On one hand, the work includes quantitative analysis that illustrates the number of impact evaluations conducted, the thematic areas studied, and the origin of the researchers (if the research teams have local researchers, and in what capacity they participate in the study). Further, they identify the dominant methodologies and the entity in charge of the evaluation (independent researchers or government organizations and agencies). Finally, they identify patterns in the funding source of studies and the implementing agencies of the evaluated interventions.

The main findings are:

- The region presents a sustained increase in the quantity of impact evaluations conducted, mainly during the last decade.
- While the largest number of evaluations is concentrated in countries with higher capacity for local⁶ research, this trend is also present in the sample of countries with less capacity for research.

⁶ Such as Mexico, Columbia, Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Peru to some extent.

- In both groups of countries, social protection programs are the most frequently evaluated.
- When social protection programs are excluded, two thematic patterns can be distinguished: in the countries with low capacity for evaluation there is a larger concentration of evaluations focused on rural development and agriculture, while the most researched themes in the rest of the region are education and economic development.
- The number of evaluations funded by multilateral agencies is greater in countries in the sample, while in the rest of the region there is a large presence of independent funding organizations.
- The involvement of local researchers in these studies is low throughout the region. This can be detrimental to the capacity of countries institutionalizing the use of impact evaluation in the process of designing public policies. The capacity development of local researchers is fundamental, especially in Central America, the Caribbean and the Andean region.
- In general, when local researchers are involved in impact evaluations in the region, their role is limited to fieldwork and data collection. When they do participate in the analysis stages, 69% of these evaluations are conducted by independent organizations and only 20% are run by multilateral agencies.
- However, multilateral agencies fund more than half of studies that incorporate local researchers in any stage. According to the authors, independent agencies fund organizations that conduct evaluations by hiring local researchers for data collection and analysis.

In addition, to understand the role of evaluations in the policy cycle, the authors conducted three case studies in Peru, El Salvador and the Dominican Republic. The focuses of the analysis were external factors such as promoters of impact evaluation, emerging institutionalization processes in the use of the impact evaluations and the challenges that face these processes.

Listed below are the findings of this project/analysis; and later we present a brief review of the case studies.

The two findings derived from this analysis are:

- In the three countries, the increase in the quantity of impact evaluations was a response to external factors. These stimuli are the product of an increase in awareness of international donors and multilateral agencies about the importance of generating rigorous evidence to inform the design of public policies.
- The government played a different role in each scenario.

The combination of external shocks with the different roles played by the local governments led to incipient processes to institutionalize the demand for evaluation. According to the authors, these processes have origins and different characteristics that present particular challenges in ensuring their sustainability as well as different possibilities of affecting the design of public policies.

The external factor that stimulated the use of impact evaluations in Peru was the presence of Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA), which primarily worked with non-governmental implementing agencies. Specifically, IPA worked with microfinance institutions (MFIs) from a sector where informing decisions with evidence derived from rigorous studies was what was expected. However, there was less potential that this evidence would be used to actually inform public policies. According to the study, this is partly because IPA does not usually incorporate local researchers in their research; and partly because the Peruvian governmental agencies are reluctant to incorporate randomized control trials (RCTs) due to the extra cost that they impose on the implementation of their programs. Further, it was also because IPA's audience is made up by the international public policy research community rather than a local audience.

The demand for evaluations in the Peruvian government arose independently, with the existence of evidence and the authorities' following heightened awareness for the necessity to reallocate resources to programs combating poverty that were not being effectively utilized. According to the authors, managers of the Results Based Budget (RBB) have the intention of using information generated by impact evaluations as tools in allocation of the budget. The media also played a part in the process, to diffuse the available evidence.

However, one of the challenges identified was guaranteeing the independence of evaluations because the processes at RBB do not involve participation of an external body, such as CONEVAL in Mexico. Also identified was the need to guarantee the credibility of the studies, such as the presence of transparency rules for the dissemination of results and the international panel of consultants, as is the case in Chile.

In El Salvador, the external factor was the MCC-GOES⁷ compact. The compact contained a memorandum of understanding in which the government of El Salvador commits to monitoring and evaluating activities financed with funds from MCC. In this sense, MCC promotes the use of rigorous attribution methodologies to determine the impacts of these initiatives. Unlike Peru, the implementation remains in the hands of national governmental agencies. The Executive Power participates in these processes through FOMILENIO, whose advisory council is chaired by the Technical Secretary of the President. Some FOMILENIO officials have received training in impact evaluations by MCC. According to the document, the government, despite their reluctance to conduct experimental studies in the past, approved two and expressed interest in continuing to use impact evaluations as instruments in the design of programs.

However, due to the fact that efforts have only been undertaken in a small sector of the Salvadorian state, there is the challenge of not only guaranteeing the continuation of evaluations when the MCC compact expires, but that they reach other sectors of the government. A second challenge is to guarantee the independence of these studies.

With respect to the Dominican Republic, according to the document, the few impact evaluations conducted in this country were largely commissioned due to requirements of donor organizations, in particular the World Bank and the International Development Bank, that is, the internal demand for rigorous evidence is not recorded. The authors argue that in this country there are no records of evaluation institutionalization processes. Giving local authors more participation, increasing the supply of training to key stakeholders and involving the program managers in the evaluations to a large extent would contribute to reversing this situation.

The authors argue that the installed capacity in countries (in terms of knowledge of state of the art methods and how to use them in the design of policies) is key at the time of adoption of impact evaluation as input for the design of policies. In countries of the Andean region, Central America and the Caribbean, the installed capacity is scarce.

In this sense, the study refers to the state of impact evaluation training offered in Latin America and shows that the time window analyzed demonstrates an increase in the quantity of courses about impact evaluations in the region, as well as the number of participants in these courses. This trend has intensified since 2006. The authors point out the need to intensify this strategy and combine it with technical assistance.

⁷ The compact MCC-GOES (available at: <https://www.mcc.gov/pages/countries/program/el-salvador-compact>) was an agreement established between the United States, through the Millennium Challenge Corporation, and the government of El Salvador. A compact is a multi-year cooperation agreement, through which/whereby the MCC finances projects to reduce poverty and stimulate economic growth.

Finally, due to the political economy of the policies that promote the use of impact evaluations in decision-making, the authors argue that it is necessary to support the construction of institutional frameworks in favor of the systematic use of impact evaluation, taking care to respond to the specifics of each case.

4. Lessons learned about the policy influence potential of impact evaluations in Latin America.

Summarized below are some of the lessons learned that arose from the implementation of impact evaluations supported by IDRC in Latin America. These experiences were compiled through three sources of information: the data collection about the projects, the systematization of the conversations that occurred during the workshop “Impact evaluation and policy influence” (see Appendix B) and in-depth interviews conducted with a group of selected researchers (Appendix D).

They are ordered in terms of the “causal factors affecting the policy influence potential of impact evaluation”, presented previously and summarized in three dimensions: context, policy influence strategy and research teams.

4.1 About the national contexts of evaluation.

1 National evaluation culture.

The countries in the region present substantial differences in their cultures of evaluation. From well-formalized and institutionalized national monitoring and evaluation systems, to countries with institutionalized capacities of evaluation in development, the region presents a range of very different realities. These characteristics affect the degree of success that both the researchers and their studies can have in terms of influencing policy.

These characteristics emerged in light of the State’s modernization agenda in the 90’s, responding to historical peculiarities and different policies. While some countries sought out higher quality of public management, others focused on the need for strengthening capacities to implement policies and programs or on the need for allocating resources in a more efficient manner. Even so, there is agreement as to **why we should evaluate**: from the technical or administrative point of view, to identify and understand the causes of successes or failures or problems of individual or collective performance; and from the political point of view, to contribute to strengthening and deepening democracy, to establish levels of responsibility and accountability mechanisms for public officials and show results and guarantee a more transparent management, to democratize management and exercise a more rational control of the public spending and consolidate democratic institutions and processes.

As noted by Cunill Grau and Ospina Bozzi (2003), two generic models of national systems of monitoring and evaluation were developed in Latin America. These models can be classified according to their functional orientation: the **planning model** and the **budget model**. The planning model is distinguished by its emphasis on political responsibility: it highlights accountability, is driven by planning entities and is organized according to the national development plan (as is the case of Colombia, with the DNP - National Department of Planning and Costa Rica, with the MIDEPLAN - Ministry of Planning). The budget model, on the other hand, emphasizes a type of managerial accountability, focuses on the budgetary discussion and is driven by the Ministries of

Finance and organized according to the budget cycle (the case of Uruguay with the OPP – Office of Planning and Budget and Chile with the DIPRES – Division of Budget and Ministry of Finance).

The lessons that emerged are:

- It is important to rely on a legal framework that requires and regulates the evaluation of public policies. This favors dialogue with the evaluated agencies.
- However, there is not always a national plan of evaluation with the capacity of articulating the demand for evaluation that government officials may have with the offer of academic research in different sectors.
- In contexts with stable evaluation policies, the legitimacy of contracts to carry out impact evaluations is an issue as it can risk jeopardizing the process of research and the results obtained.
- The existence of developed national evaluation systems does not guarantee by itself accessibility or the quality of data and information about the evaluated interventions. In some cases, access to administrative data is still an unresolved issue for local bureaucracies/governments (Colombia case).
- Diversifying incentives for evaluators, managers and politicians strains the use of findings and the implementation of recommendations.
- The existence of confidentiality clauses for impact evaluations can negatively affect communication strategies and dissemination of results and recommendations.

“Promoviendo el Ahorro en Familias JUNTOS” Pilot Program

In Peru, the [Programa Nacional de Apoyo Directo a los Más Pobres JUNTOS](#), together with *Proyecto Capital*, implemented the pilot program [“Promoviendo el Ahorro en Familias JUNTOS”](#). One of the reasons this intervention was implemented was the evidence of the savings accounts delivered as part of the Proyecto Juntos program not being used by the beneficiaries. For this reason and in the context of the pilot program, the recipients of the savings accounts were trained in issues of personal finance and saving incentives were offered.

[Instituto de Estudios Peruanos](#) (IEP) did an impact evaluation of the pilot program. The study sought to demonstrate whether a complementary strategy of conditional cash transfer and the granting of savings accounts, with finance education and a savings incentives scheme, generated a positive impact in poor populations. Further, it sought to assess if this would also stimulate the investment in productive assets and an improvement in the spending on the components of the program’s correspondent scheme (health and education).

With respect to the capacity of evaluation in recent years, Peru has seen a “technocratization” of the government. With an important number of ministers with a PhD from foreign universities, a vice ministry¹ of the *Ministerio de Desarrollo e Inclusión Social* dedicated to implementation of evaluations and the enactment of a model of Results Based Budget within the *Ministerio de Economía*, impact evaluations are increasingly a tool for decision makers.

2 Relevance of the issue/sector in the policy agenda.

- The recommendations derived from impact evaluations that study issues with a strong presence in the development agenda, the policy discussions and in the public opinion (for example, through the media) have more potential in terms of effectively achieving policy influence.

“Educación Financiera” Pilot Program

The evaluation of the pilot program “Educación financiera” was aimed to identify the impact of financial education provision on the saving capacity of the beneficiaries of the program. The study was based in the Universidad de Chile and later moved to the *Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile*.

Regarding the importance of the issue, according to the research team, financial education is a fundamental issue in the political agenda of the Chilean government. The primary manifestation of this is the commitment of Chile before the G20 to expand financial inclusion to the Chilean population.

- Policy influence can happen in the medium or long term, due to the opening of windows of political opportunity that can give course to recommendations. Therefore, keeping the research team’s attention on the analysis of the local context is strategic to adjust their influence strategy.

“Promoviendo el Ahorro en Familias JUNTOS” Pilot Program

After the 2012 presidential elections in Peru, the social policy infrastructure changed. The main sign of this was the creation of the *Ministerio de Desarrollo e Inclusión Social*. The research team interpreted this as a window of opportunity as the head of this ministry had been part of the *Proyecto Capital*. Further, the arrival of this person in the ministry gave financial education more relevance in the charter. An example of this was the creation of a department that was responsible for these issues.

3 Characteristics of the evaluated intervention.

- When processing changes, some plans/ programs/ projects are more flexible than others to incorporate both the methodology and the results and recommendations. This may be due to the scale of the program, its origin, the dynamics of power and the hierarchy of intervention inside the implementing agencies. In this sense, one of the participants of the Impact Evaluation and Policy Influence workshop said, “*The evaluation of a small program, with a limited budget, with a technical team in charge of the program, probably has a normal enough course, with discussion of design and implementation of results and debate of what consequences the evaluation has in terms of management of the program. In the other extreme, we have programs that are promoted from the highest levels of the system. To evaluate that type of program is very complicated because, in general, the policy discussion has already taken place and it can be very difficult to say to the president (for example) that it is not a correct decision.*”

- It is important that the interventions evaluated are flexible and are open to changes, but at the same time it is important that they are institutionalized, that there is a clear division of roles and stable procedures to guarantee stability before occurrences such as staff turnover.

“Educación Financiera” Pilot Program

One of the characteristics of a program that can determine the success of the influence strategies is whether or not it is in its pilot phase. In these cases, the results of an evaluation can affect the decision of scaling or not the intervention. In the particular case of the pilot program “Educación financiera”, the government had already manifested its interests in scaling the intervention. The design of the scaled program took into account the recommendations of the evaluation such as the incorporation of new teaching methodologies.

4 Characteristics of the impact evaluation.

- Evaluations based on research questions of interest to the implementing agency have larger potential to influence policy. Therefore, to involve key managers during the evaluation and, especially at the beginning, is advantageous. The following contribution of a participant of the Impact Evaluation and Policy Influence Workshop illustrates this point well: *“We do not impose our agenda in the evaluation questions. This is more or less the strategy that has worked for us until now, justly because the learning is understood as something that emerges from the manager’s own doubts and ends up being to their own benefit because it has to be a management tool.”*
- The incorporation qualitative approaches that complement the studies can generate relevant information for the users. Doing this during the early stages of research can help to define new questions that are of interest to the key actors in the policy. With respect to this, a workshop attendee said: *“Another thing that we do and helps generate valid and useful questions for the evaluation is to take them to the field. In an opportunity, for example, we did qualitative work in the field: we conducted interviews, focus groups in which staff from the implementing agency participated. This was useful because in these instances concerns of the beneficiaries emerged that they hadn’t imagined.”*
- The lack of impact or identification of heterogeneous or unexpected impacts can be a source of recommendations that catch the attention of managers. They can even encourage the dialogue between the implementing agency and external actors.

“Educación Financiera” Pilot Program

The impact evaluation of the “Educación Financiera” pilot program did not show an impact on the saving capacity of beneficiaries. This did not stop the research team from successfully influencing the policy. According to the evaluators: *“to find bad results helped the implementing agency to reverse what wasn’t working”*.

One of the things that weren’t working was that the beneficiaries did not attend the training workshops, a key component of the financial education strategy, presumably because the costs of transportation were very high. The implementing agency had this in mind when it decided to scale the intervention: today the program has incorporated new methodologies of teaching that have reduced the levels of absenteeism of the beneficiaries.

5 Characteristics of the users.

- It is useful to generate training on monitoring and evaluation methodologies and approaches to, given that the implementing agencies in general do participate in different stages of the studies.
- It is also relevant to put the Theory of Change of an intervention in writing, and that all the stakeholders are familiar with it to assure linkage with the questions that guide the evaluation.

The experience of a participant of the workshop is interesting to illustrate both previous points:

“Those who approach us are the program managers and they have a blind faith that their program works. What they want to know is how much it works, fundamentally because they need to demonstrate to their superiors and constituents. The second question that emerges is, how can I enhance the impact?”

The problem comes when you want to know what the impact is and what are the outcomes we want to measure. In this exercise the managers have ideas that are usually difficult to carry out in quantitative terms, such as employability and social inclusion. They really believe that they impact these dimensions, but have no idea of how to translate that into measurable concepts.

What we try to do when we arrive is to have a pair of workshops with the program managers, the consultants and others and do an exercise on the Theory of Change, to try to get them to imagine the process from when they contribute their money until employability improves. What happens in between. And there are a lot of things that happen while they work to refine the outcomes that we want to measure and they start to realize the complexity of measuring them and they understand us a little more with the methodological concerns that we have.”

- If the works starts from the formulation of evaluation questions with the implementing teams, a strong connection is established that can be taken advantage of over the course of the investigation.
- A low capacity of social demand for impact evaluation results is noticeable. However, if novel and wide-reaching formats of dissemination are used, it is possible to call the results and findings to the general public’s attention (as a potential user).
- Different types of users have a differential power to modify the policy based on the recommendations derived from an evaluation. For example, the director of an independent organization that implements a small-scale program would have more leeway to act than the operational manager of a priority policy within the development plan of a government.

“Promoviendo el Ahorro en Familias JUNTOS” Pilot Program

During the evaluation, the research team perceived interest in the study and willingness by high-level authorities of key public entities. However, the middle and low-level authorities were not necessarily committed to the study. Therefore, it was necessary to generate training and exposure in the day-to-day of the program and about the reality of the beneficiaries. This will be developed in more depth in following sections.

4.2. About the policy influence strategies adopted by the research team

6 Policy influence strategy.

- Except for requirements that emerge from the funders, research teams do not usually elaborate *a priori* a systematic policy influence plan to implement during the investigation. This, however, does not mean that they do not try to influence policy.
- Requiring the design or implementation of an influence strategy as a condition for financing impact evaluations may be helpful: *“It seems to me that the system that requires one to have financing has to follow some obligatory steps, it is a type of incentive, an incentive system that can be hard, costly for us but one that leads us to achieve the final result, that the final evaluations are useful”*, said a researcher during the workshop.
- If planned from the beginning of the research, influence strategies are more likely to be effective. Knowing the stakeholders map, their needs and objectives, and relying on a specific plan of action and budget can be critical factors for success when bringing the results to the decision makers.
- It is essential to generate more and better communication strategies that make the findings, results and recommendations of impact evaluations accessible to various audiences, in different formats and with a variety of messages.
- The in-person activities (meetings, seminars, workshops) can function as opportunities for the research team to become available to the managers, collaborate in the implementation of recommendations and increase the commitment among stakeholders/actors. These events are key, because not only they generate the occasion to inform the other actors about the progress of the studies, but they are an opportunity to reflect collectively on the evaluated intervention.
- It is important for research teams to incorporate different visions that complement the quantitative analysis. Incorporating qualitative approaches, for example, allows not only to identify impact but to have a more profound understanding of the causal mechanisms behind it. This approach can make the results and recommendations more attractive for managers. It is critical to develop capacity among research teams for communicating results.

Pilot Program “Promoviendo el Ahorro en Familias JUNTOS”

The form of engagement with the implementing agency and other key stakeholders is relevant. In this case, the research team developed an engagement strategy based on virtual meetings and emails, as well as a large component of face-to-face meetings:

1. Meetings with the management of the pilot program.
2. Private presentations with the staff of the program: in these meetings the research team presented the progress and preliminary results of the study.
3. Conferences in Cuzco: the research team brought together stakeholders that did not form part of the management team but came from the institute, to inform them of the experience and become in contact with the users. These meetings were very useful, because resistance to evaluation among middle and low-level officials disappeared after the officials saw the results of the study and were in contact with the beneficiary population.
4. After the presidential elections, with the creation of the *Ministerio de Desarrollo e Inclusión Social* and staff turnover in the participating institutions, the research team saw the need to reestablish engagement in those cases where their counterparts had changed. In particular, the research team implemented a strategy of communication directed at the heads of the different departments of the ministry.

Program “Red Unidos”

In Colombia, the Red Unidos program seeks to alleviate extreme poverty through the articulation of three lines of action: psychosocial support for beneficiary families and their community, management of the offer and preferential access to government social services for the beneficiary families, and institutional strengthening. The program seeks to bring the offer of social plans and programs to the most vulnerable populations, and guarantee them preferential access. In this context, the impact evaluation of the Red Unidos program, implemented by *Fedesarrollo* (Colombia) and the Institute for Fiscal Studies (England), sought to evaluate the impact of the intervention using different measures of empowerment of the beneficiaries.

Regarding the engagement strategy with the implementing agency and key policy stakeholders, in addition to contacts via telephone or email, it had three fundamental stages:

1. Meeting with the technical team.
2. Meeting with the technical team and the director of Red Unidos, Beatriz Linares. At that time, the director had been at the institution for two years and was interested in a gender perspective, thus she was more open to hearing what the research team had to say about the program.
3. Seminar in Fedesarrollo. This was a seminar with a semi-academic profile. Different stakeholders of the policy were invited. In attendance were representatives from the *Planeación Nacional* (key institution in the determination of public policy directions), ANSPE (institution that administers the program) and academics. In addition, Orazio Attanasio of the IFS was present, who is also an advisor of the program. In this space the research team presented both the evaluation results and the pertinent recommendations and opened up a debate over which direction the program should be taken.

7 Characteristics of the engagement process between the research team, the implementing agency and other key stakeholders.

- It is important to understand the evaluated intervention’s logic of thinking, its agents and its internal dynamics to speak its own language and generate sufficient empathy to increase the confidence in the research team and its future findings. Developing a trusting relationship with the main stakeholders early on is a means of strengthening the policy influence strategy in the medium and long term.
- It is recommended to prepare the design of the evaluation through a shared exercise with the implementing agency, as this increases ownership and favors a thorough understanding of the research.
- When there is somewhat structured demand for evaluation by the implementing agency, a more fertile space is generated so that the derived recommendations of the research feedback into the public policy in question. According to a workshop participant “*They wanted the evaluation, they asked the question, **they wanted to know** what type of transfer modality was the most effective for their interests. We conducted the evaluation. And that type of*”

relationship worked very well, because it was not that we were trying to convince someone that they must have evaluation, they wanted it."

- Demand for evaluation by the implementing agency can have distinct motivations, such as national norms (Mexico and Colombia), requirements of the funders, the opportunity to legitimize the management, or the will or necessity to redesign the program in question. In this last case, it is more plausible that the teams can be effectively influential.
- It is fundamental to consider the existence of other interested relevant parties (outside the implementing agency) when attempting to influence policy. A complete mapping of stakeholders is key to generating ample space for dialogue about the issue or evaluated sector.

Pilot Program “Promoviendo el Ahorro en Familias JUNTOS”

An essential component of policy influence strategies is the engagement with the implementing agency and other key stakeholders, particularly, that the engagement occurs early on. Some components of the engagement strategy of the research team will be mentioned below:

1. Before the impact evaluation, the IEP conducted a qualitative evaluation in two districts. After this study, the research team decided to take the main stakeholders of the program to the field. According to the research team, this allowed the stakeholders to understand firsthand the experience of the beneficiaries and convinced them of the necessity to conduct a more exhaustive evaluation.
2. Further, some stakeholders, such as *Banco de la Nación*, were took part in the design of the study. In this case, *Banco de la Nación* collaborated in the allocation of treatment and control groups.
3. After the change in government that involved personnel changes, the research team had to rebuild links with the implementing agency and the recently created *Ministerio de Desarrollo e Inclusión Social*. For this they held meetings with the directors as a first step towards involving other departments within the ministry.

8 Characteristics and dissemination of the findings.

- The technical quality of the findings is fundamental, as makes for the credibility of the team and its research. It is equally important that the teams have the capacity to transmit the findings and recommendations in a language closest to that of the implementing agencies, when the installed capacity does not include experts in evaluation.
- When generating recommendations that can be “appropriated” by the implementing agencies, it is critical to share and analyze preliminary results with managers and technicians to generate recommendations with respect to which a sense of ownership can be developed.
- In cases where the teams are able to stimulate research demand by the media, it is important to rely on beforehand on the resources and interests of the researchers and spokespeople to respond to their requirements (reciprocal relationship).

- If the dissemination of documents is guided by the demand of political parties and other stakeholders of the political community, a very heterogeneous level of communication between the technical teams is favored. There are some issues that require more promotion for them to be perceived as necessary.

Pilot Program “Promoviendo el Ahorro en Familias JUNTOS”

As part of the communication strategy the research team produced documents targeted to different audiences, listed below:

- The main document is the evaluation document, which at the time of writing this case study, was being edited as part of a larger book.
- The program also produced documents called "En Breves," that have a lesser scope and are characterized by a limited use of technical language. These documents had wider dissemination in the general public.
- The research team produced a document of results in policy.

9 y 10 Characteristics and communication of the recommendations.

- When working on a wide spectrum of issues, it is necessary to rely on a diversified influence strategy to reach the respective stakeholders in each field, which may involve a strenuous force of production, reflection and dialogue (CIPPEC, 2014).
- As mentioned above, the existence of confidentiality clauses can limit the capacity of the research teams from disseminating the evaluation results and the derived recommendations. For this reason it is convenient to analyze these limits before beginning communication and dissemination activities.

4.3. About the capabilities of the research team.

11 Characteristics of the research team.

- It is important that a relationship of trust exists between the research team and the managers of the intervention being evaluated. The existence of a prior relationship with key stakeholders can help generate a fluid engagement during the evaluation. It nonetheless is important to generate some type of incentives so that the evaluators connect with those who will use the findings during the evaluation processes.
- To create larger presence in the media and influence public policy, the team should, from the start, establish the activities that will be expected of each researcher. Further, they should create incentives so that the researchers are involved as a key part in the policy influence process.
- The existence of a press officer in the research team is a key piece of these initiatives. The publication of original documents is very important, but even more so, their “translation” to diverse formats of print media, radio and television. The organization of press conferences, interviews, brochures and diverse events are also important, as well as the media training received by the report authors.

- The presence of local evaluators in the research team is important when procuring a fluid relationship with the key stakeholders.
- It is also useful that the teams are interdisciplinary. As mentioned above, when implementing agencies participate in defining the research questions, one of the things that they typically want to know is through which mechanisms is the impact generated and how. It is important to incorporate qualitative approaches that can respond to these questions, as well as to rely on the capacity of the teams to respond to this demand. According to a workshop participant: *“The impact evaluations have value when you incorporate different points of view. Above all, qualitative analysis can really enrich. One says, ‘Well, this is the impact, but why?’ There I think that having multidisciplinary teams is good.”*

5. Some conclusions

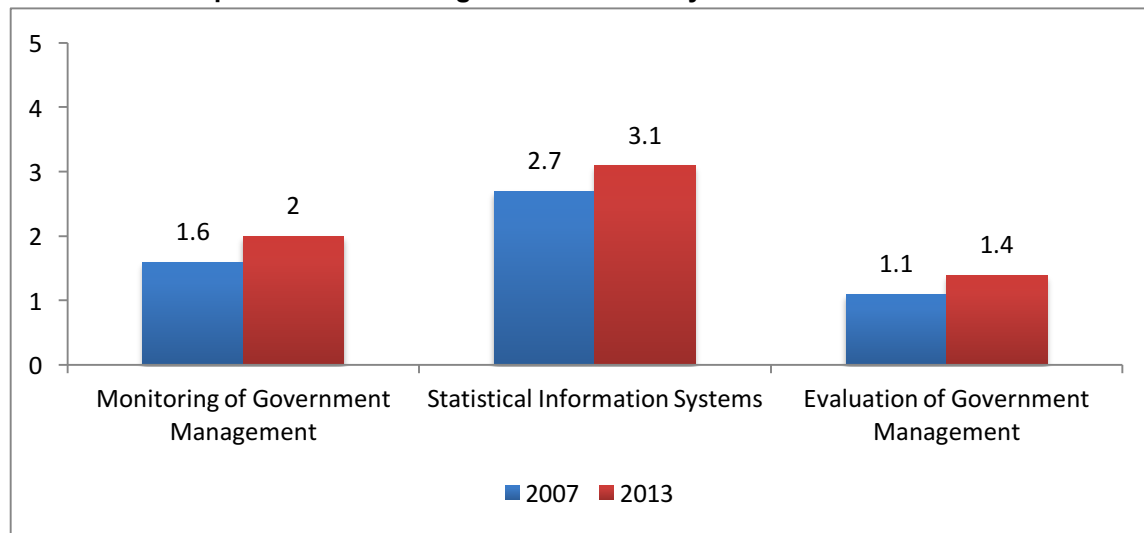
The international experience demonstrates that impact evaluations are an important tool in advancing a process of decision-making based on evidence. Countries in Latin America made many efforts to expand the quantity and quality of evaluations; however, monitoring and evaluation systems remain the weakest point of results-based management (BID, 2014). The following charts provide some relevant data on the state of monitoring and evaluation systems, through which it is observed that the region is slowly improving in the key indicators, although the region shows low levels of average development in those components of results-based management. Even more, the monitoring and evaluation pillar is among the ones that have more countries in a low state of development (BID, 2014).

Indicators of monitoring and evaluation system according to groups of countries

Figure 2.18 Indicators of monitoring and evaluation systems according to groups of countries				
Indicators of monitoring and evaluation systems	GpRD Index	Development Grade of the GpRD		
		Advanced	Average	Low
Monitoring Institutions	2.1	4.5	2.1	0.6
Scope of Monitoring of programs and projects	1.4	4.0	1.0	0.8
Use and Diffusion of the monitoring information/data	1.1	3.7	0.9	0.1
Systems of Statistical Information	2.8	4.1	2.7	2.0
Legal and institutional framework of the evaluation	1.5	3.9	1.3	0.6
Scope and articulation of the evaluation system	0.6	2.8	0.3	0.1
Actions derived from non-compliance with goals	0.8	3.1	0.4	0.2
Dissemination of evaluation results	1.2	4.6	0.7	0.3
Total	1.6	3.8	1.3	0.7

Source: Garcia Lopez and Garcia Moreno, 2010: 77.

Evolution of the pillars of monitoring and evaluation systems



Source:

Source: BID, 2014

When developing an evaluation system, there are many challenges that are related to garnering demand for evaluations. Among them is the lack of regulatory and institutional frameworks, and further, often the countries that have these regulatory frameworks still need technical or economic assistance to implement the evaluations. Another challenge worth noting is the need to expand the implementation of evaluations to other programs beyond the flagship programs of the administration (BID, 2014).

There are also challenges related to the supply side. Latin American countries still have much work to do on the side of use of evaluations. If the evaluations are not utilized by the public or social sector to make strategic management decisions, all the investment to produce the evaluation is spent in vain.

In addition to the diversity in the region, the picture we see with our research is encouraging. As mentioned by Stuti Tripathi (3ie) in the Impact Evaluation and Policy Influence workshop conducted in November of 2014 in San Pablo, it is important to recognize and celebrate achieved progress. Evaluations are having a larger place in the regional research agenda and a role in making increasingly important policy decisions. The successful experiences of institutionalizing the demand for evaluation open a path so that emerging initiatives follow their example and other countries consider and implement them.

However, we must not leave out the places where there is still work to be done. New evaluations should rely on greater participation of local researchers, for which it is fundamental to continue encouraging the development of research capabilities throughout the region. This involves not only having top-level professionals but also increasing the supply of quality training in universities in the region. On the other hand, the institutionalization of the processes must not follow one recipe but adapt to national contexts, while continuing to inspire success stories in neighboring countries.

Throughout this paper we assume that **the research teams or organizations, composed in diverse ways and with different capacities, can make decisions relative to the planning and implementation of influence strategies that affect the use of the findings and recommendations that the impact evaluations produce.**

Similarly, we propose that the national evaluation contexts, and in particular, the degree of institutionalization of the monitoring and evaluation systems impact the ability of effective influence of the research results in public policy decision making.

Thus, in contexts with greater institutionalization of evaluation, a strategic and active influence plan by the teams often results in changes of varying scope and degree in public policy. While in similar contexts, if a strategic influence plan is not conscientiously implemented, the chances of reaching the policy or decision-making levels are diminished. However, in scenarios where the institutionalization is low or null, an influence strategy can be effective only if it combines some very strong triggering factors of context (a “champion” of evaluation, a unique window of political opportunity, a hot topic, etc.). On the contrary, contexts that are closed to systematic and organized evaluations, combined with teams and organizations that do not exercise any influence strategies, will not be able to influence decisions with their results.

Type of influence according to national contexts.

		Teams or Research Organizations	
Evaluation Contexts		High capacity to influence	Low capacity to influence
	Institutionalized	Effective	Potentially effective
	Not Institutionalized	Potentially effective	Ineffective

Source: CIPPEC, 2014

The lessons learned that we synthesized contribute to preparation and implementation of the best policy influence strategies for research teams that conduct impact evaluations. In turn, the list of factors that impact the effectiveness of influence is exhaustive and can act as a guide for the design of successful influence/ strategies.

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7. Appendix A. Factors that affect policy influence potential of impact evaluations

Dimensions	Factors	Observable indicators
CONTEXT	1. Culture of evaluation / Enabling environment and evaluation policy (Rosenstein Framework / Evalpartners)	a. Existence of evaluation policy/ evaluation policy in development in the relevant administrative area
		b. Existence of evaluation policy/ evaluation policy in development in the relevant sector
		c. Number of evaluations in the relevant administrative area (whether or not an evaluation policy exists)
		d. Number of evaluations in the sector (whether or not an evaluation policy exists)
	2. Characteristics of the policy sector	a. Relevance of the issue for the intended users
		b. Profile (in the public agenda agenda/ in the media)
		c. Degree of agreement on the issue between interest groups
		d. Geographic scale
	3. Characteristics of the evaluated program	a. Geographic scale of the program
		b. State of the program at the time of the evaluation (X

		years from the beginning)	
		c. Pilot program or not	
		d. Government	
		e. NGO	
		f. Implementing agency	
		g. Donor	
		h. Media	
		i. Civil society	
		j. Institutional level	i. Centralized
			ii. Regional
			iii. Municipal
		k. Degree of control over changes in the program (can change the program or only advocate for change)	
		l. Presence of experts/supporters of the evaluation	
		m. Changes in staff	
4. Characteristics of the Impact Evaluation at the time of (a specific type) of influence in public policy	a. Degree of progress in the evaluation. Availability of:		i. Baseline results
			ii. Preliminary results
			iii. Final draft report
			iv. Final report
	b. Design of the impact evaluation		i. Randomized Control Trials?
			ii. Quasi experimental
			iii. Counterfactual
			iv. None of the above
	c. Time of Impact Evaluation (does it coincide with the emergence of a window of opportunity in		

		process of decision-making?)	
		d. Novelty / innovation of the study (whether it is the first body of evidence of the program's impact)	
		e. Geographic scale of the impact evaluation	
	5. Characteristics of the user	a. Government	
		b. NGO	
		c. Implementing agency	
		d. Donor	
		e. Media	
		f. Civil society	
		g. Institutional level	i. Municipal
ii. Regional			
iii. Centralized			
h. Degree of control of changes in the program (can change the program or only advocate for change)			
i. Presence of experts / supporters of the evaluation			
j. Staff changes			
INFLUENCE/ADVOCACY	6. Characteristics of the policy influence strategy	a. Awareness of its existence (all members of the research team are aware of the existence of the policy influence strategy)	
		b. Budget allocation to the policy influence strategy	

		c. Days - person specifically assigned to policy influence activities (communication and dissemination efforts)		
		d. Directionality of interaction (guided by the research team? guided by the user?)		
		e. Form of interaction (in person, by telephone, via mail)		
		f. Nature of relationship/interaction (decision-making shared? Role of consultant?)		
		g. Number and diversity of the groups at which the policy influence strategy is oriented (of the total groups that could be targeted)		
		h. Use of different language / channels / formats for the different groups to which the policy influence strategy is oriented		
		7. Characteristics of the process of engagement between the researchers and the intended users	a. Time of initiation	
			b. Duration	
			c. Frequency	
			d. Directionality (guided by the research team? Guided by the user?)	
			e. Form of interaction (in person, by telephone, via	

		mail)	
		f. Nature of relationship/interaction (decision-making shared? Role of consultant?)	
		g. Budget allocation to the policy influence strategy	
		h. Days - person specifically assigned to policy influence activities (communication and dissemination efforts)	
		i. Use of different languages / channels / formats for different groups to which the policy influence strategy is oriented	
		j. Are the research teams and user compatible?	
	8. Characteristics of the findings of the impact evaluation	a. Specific and conclusive results	
		b. Perception of the research team about whether the results are specific and conclusive	
		c. Novelty (with respect to what was previously known by the users)	
		d. Consistency of the results with the direction of the public policy (if it is possible to share the findings with the management of the public policy)	

	9. Communication of the findings of the impact evaluation	a. Length (number of words)	
		b. Audiovisual material (videos, blogs, websites, infographics, charts, tables)	
		c. Translation to the local language	
		d. Use of different language / channels / formats for different groups to which the policy influence strategy is oriented	
		e. Adequate use of languages / channels / formats employed	
	10. Characteristics of recommendations (if there are any).	a. Clarity	
		b. Specificity	
		c. Are they practical	
		d. Are they relevant in the context	
		e. Are they novel (in comparison to the users' prior beliefs)	
		f. Are they consistent with the current direction of the intervention being evaluated?	
	11. Communication of recommendations	a. Number of recommendations	
		b. Total length (number of words)	
		c. Audiovisual material (videos, blogs, websites, infographics, charts, tables)	
		d. Translation to the local language	

		e. Use of different languages / channels / formats for different groups to which the policy influence strategy is oriented	
		f. Adequate use of languages / channels / formats employed	
TEAM	12. Characteristics of the team	a. Presence of policy influence champions	
		b. Knowledge and comprehension of the context	i. Capacity to anticipate / evaluate opportunities for policy influence
			ii. Integration of contact network of the research team in the context
			iii. Previous experience of the research in the country/ geographic area
			iv. Documented existence of an analysis of the context
			v. Evidence of change to the policy influence strategy based in key political events or changes in the context
		c. Reputation / credibility of the research team	i. Prestige of institutional affiliation (perception of the user, number of appointments)
			ii. Individual reputation in the context
			iii. Quality of previous instances of collaboration between

			the research team and the user (if there had been).
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8. Appendix B. About the workshop

On November 19th, 2014 the workshop “Policy influence of impact evaluation” took place in San Pablo. Organized by the IDRC, GRADE, and CEDLAS and facilitated by CIPPEC, the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie) also took part.

During the meeting, attendants presented reflections and learning experiences about the policy influence of impact evaluations on policies in Latin America and worked in groups to discuss this subject. This included the results of the analysis of countries with lower capacity for research, supported by IDRC and the progress of the Policy Influencing and Monitoring (PIM), headed by 3ie.

Posteriormente se compartieron y discutieron las conclusiones de cada mesa de trabajo relativas a los desafíos y oportunidades (de carácter institucional y otros) de la influencia en políticas públicas a partir de las evaluaciones de impacto y al rol de las estrategias de incidencia a la hora de incidir de manera efectiva en las políticas públicas.

Later, each worktable shared and discussed the conclusions concerning challenges and opportunities (of institutional character and others) for the policy influence of impact evaluations and the role of policy influence strategies when it comes to influencing public policies.

To conclude, Stuti Tripathi (3ie), Miguel Jaramillo (GRADE), María Laura Alzúa (CEDLAS) and Miguel Foguel (IPEA) reflected on the results of the day and the challenges facing the future of policy influence, based on the findings of impact evaluations in the region.

Nineteen Latin American researchers attended the workshop from 14 organizations in the region (including Inter-American Development Bank, Development Bank of Latin America, International Food Policy Research Institute, ARU Foundation, Fedesarrollo, Colegio de Mexico, CADEP, Foundation INESAD).

To read more about the workshop, visit:

<http://www.vippal.cippec.org/taller-evaluacion-de-impacto-e-influencia-en-politicas/>

9. Appendix C. List of relevant projects

Project	Name of evaluation	Sector	Country	Organizations
Beyond social protection	Impact evaluation of the program: “Red Unidos” (Colombia).	Social Protection	Colombia	Fedesarrollo
	Impact evaluation of the conditional cash transfer program “AFAM-PE” (Uruguay).	Social Protection	Uruguay	IECON
	Impact evaluation of the non-contributory pension program “ Pensión 65 ” (Perú).	Social Protection	Peru	GRADE
	Impact evaluation of the conditional cash transfer program “ JUNTOS ” (Perú)	Social Protection	Peru	GRADE
	Impact evaluation of the non-contributory pension program “Renta Dignidad” (Bolivia).	Social Protection	Bolivia	Foundation ARU
Todas Cuentan – Research Platform about Financial Inclusion and Social Protection	Impact Evaluation in the framework of “Proyecto Capital”: Impact Evaluation of the program: “Programa Piloto Promoción del Ahorro en Familias JUNTOS” (Perú).	Social Protection and Financial Inclusion	Peru	Instituto de Estudios Peruanos
	Evaluations under the initiative “Todas Cuentan”: Impact evaluations of Soap operas for Finance Education programs: Telenovela financiera (Perú); ‘Isidora la ahorradora’ y ‘Diva la Ahorrativa’ (Perú y Colombia). Impact Evaluation of the program: “Programa Piloto Educación Financiera del Fondo de Solidaridad e Inversión Social (FOSIS)” (Chile), Impact Evaluation of the savings pilot program “Chile Cuenta” (Chile).	Social Protection and Financial Inclusion	Chile	Universidad Católica de Chile
	Impact Evaluation of the	Labor	México	Instituto

labor courts in México: The case of the Cuautitlán	program “Mejorando las cortes laborales en México: El caso de Cuautitlán”.	Market		Tecnológico Autónomo de México
Labor markets for inclusive growth in Latin America	Impact evaluation of the Lei Aprendiz program.	Labor Market	Argentina	CEDLAS
Promoting innovation in the services sector: towards productivity and competition (Uruguay)	Impact evaluations of interventions to improve the productivity and competitiveness of small and medium companies.	Production	Uruguay	Centro de Investigaciones Tecnológicas

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The Policy Influence, Monitoring and Evaluation Program at CIPPEC has two principal objectives: to strengthen the the influence of research on public policy and to strengthen monitoring and evaluation of public policies, plans and programs through the development of specific methods and tools.

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