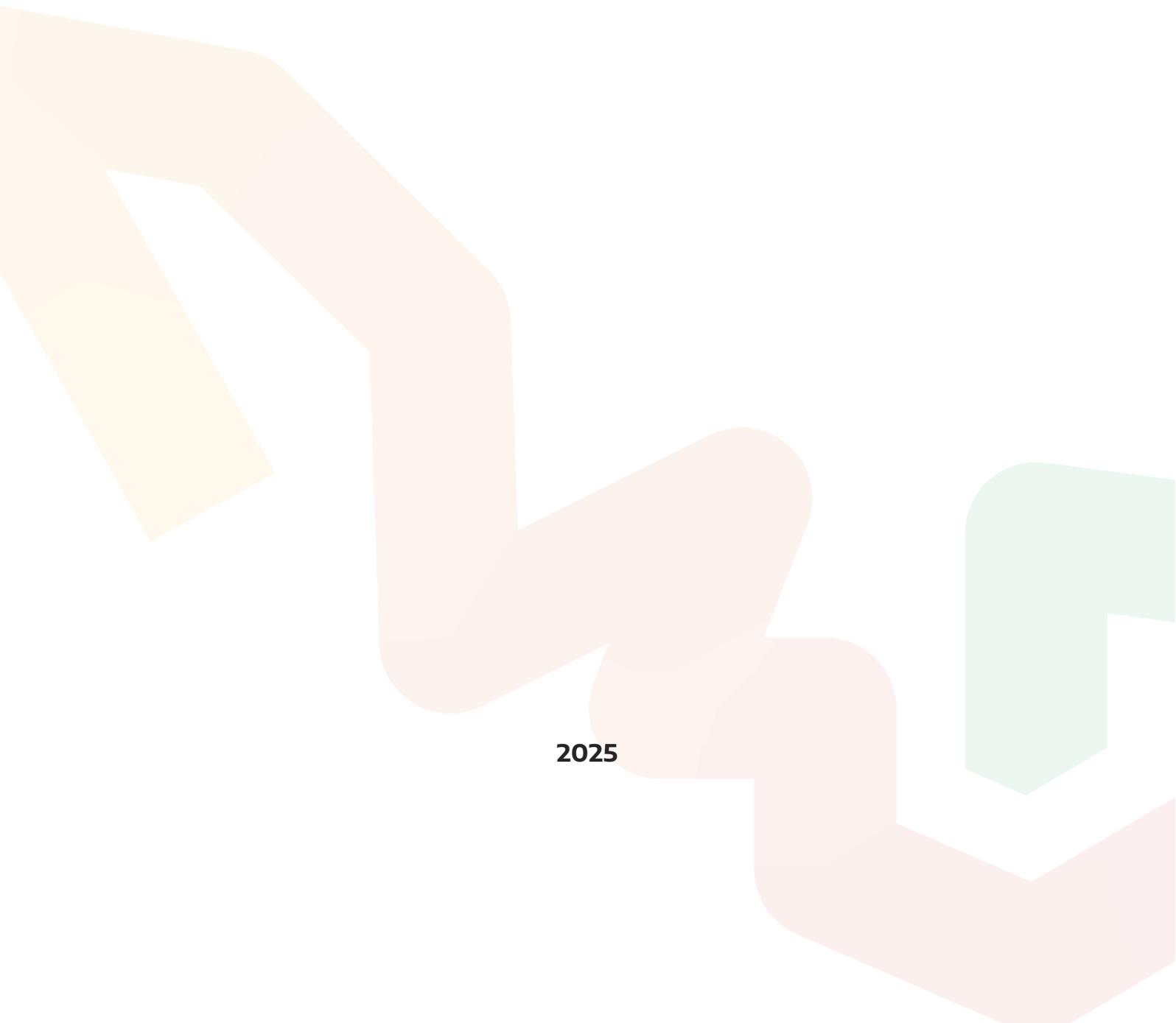


# **Evidence Ecosystem in Latin America and the Caribbean: HubLAC mapping to strengthen Evidence-Informed Policies**

2025

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## 1. About the LAC Hub and this mapping

The Latin America and Caribbean Evidence Hub (Hub LAC) recognizes the importance of systematically mapping the organizations, individuals, and initiatives that comprise the evidence ecosystem in our region. This work aims to identify who these actors are, where they are located, the thematic areas in which they work, the types of activities they carry out, their needs, and how they connect with other initiatives promoting and strengthening Evidence-Informed Policies (EIPs).

This mapping is part of the Hub LAC's network articulation and strengthening strategies, which are aimed at:

- Identify collaboration opportunities
- Promote the generation and use of evidence to inform public policy
- Facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experiences among actors and organizations in the regional EIP ecosystem

Thus, this first edition of the mapping is fundamentally descriptive and its purpose is to offer a snapshot or panoramic view of the current evidence ecosystem in Latin America and the Caribbean. It is, therefore, a collaborative effort to build the foundation of a living, constantly updated and expanding mapping that allows for the exchange of information between the supply and demand of evidence for decision-making and collaboration among the different actors involved. Ultimately, this contributes to building a dynamic and diverse community that connects and mobilizes the producers, intermediaries, and users of knowledge in Latin America and the Caribbean, so that decision-making is informed by the best available evidence.

## 2. Objective

To map and characterize the actors that influence the use of evidence in political decision-making in Latin America and the Caribbean, generating

knowledge that strengthens the alliances of the LAC Hub, informs priorities and connects the regional ecosystem.

*What are we trying to understand with this analysis?*

The information gathered through mapping was analyzed to better understand the regional ecosystem for the use of evidence and how the Hub can contribute more strategically to strengthening it. In particular, the analysis allowed us to:

- Identify regional and thematic distribution patterns of the actors involved in the promotion and use of evidence.
- Recognize areas of interest, gaps and specific needs within the ecosystem, providing input for defining Hub priorities.
- Identify organizations with potential for strategic collaborations and long-term alliances.
- Facilitate collaboration between actors with common interests and agendas, promoting exchange and learning networks.
- To guide actions to strengthen capacities, develop joint initiatives and disseminate relevant financing opportunities for the region.

### 3. Conceptual Framework

The mapping of the LAC Hub is based on the principles of strategic articulation and community of practice, understanding the evidence ecosystem as the set of people, organizations, initiatives and networks that generate, synthesize, communicate or use evidence for decision-making in public policies, in this case, in Latin America and the Caribbean.

This approach is inspired by the experiences of international evidence networks such as the Africa Evidence Network (<https://africaevidencenetwork.org/>), EVIPNet of the World Health Organization (<https://www.who.int/initiatives/evidence-informed-policy-network>), WHO

Europe Evidence-Informed Policy Network  
(<https://www.who.int/europe/initiatives/evidence-informed-policy-network-%28evipnet%29-europe>) and the Evidence Synthesis Infrastructure Collaborative - ESIC (<https://www.evidencesic.org>), prioritizing:

- Horizontal collaboration between diverse actors.
- The use of structured and up-to-date data to facilitate interactions and partnerships.
- Respect for confidentiality and protection of personal data.
- Promoting a EIP culture in the region.

The mapping does not seek to generate a ranking or evaluate organizations, but to collectively build a living knowledge base of the ecosystem, which allows the identification of collaboration opportunities, synergies and regional strengths.

## 4. A brief note on the methodology

### 4.1 Participants

Participants included individuals and organizations interested in EIP in the region, differing according to the participation modality:

Participation via asynchronous online form: individuals and organizations registered and subscribed to our newsletter, following our social media or who had access to the form through other channels. This method allowed for the participation of a wide range of actors in the regional ecosystem.

Participation in in-depth interviews: actors selected from the preliminary analysis of the form and applying diversity criteria to ensure a balanced representation of the ecosystem according to type of actor (individual or institutional), country, sector, profile and scope of action.

## 4.2 Instruments

Two main instruments were used:

- Asynchronous online form, available in Spanish, Portuguese and English, which included questions about identification, work areas, activities, use and generation of evidence, and collaboration interests.
- Virtual semi-structured interviews, conducted with selected actors, with the purpose of delving deeper into strategies, barriers, facilitators, good practices and opportunities for collaboration.

## 4.3 Operational flow

First, the online form was developed in three languages (Spanish, Portuguese, and English), and pilot tests were conducted to validate both the content and linguistic appropriateness. The semi-structured interviews were designed considering recent studies on the topic (Osorio Calderon, 2024).<sup>1</sup> They were developed in collaboration with the study's author and the Hub's researchers. The interview scripts were reviewed and validated through pilots with a Hub director and a close partner.

The data collection process was carried out in three stages: identification, selection, and conducting interviews. First, key stakeholders were identified from Hub records (registered via website or email), events, social media, references, and thematic databases (e.g., lists of stakeholders identified in previous research, industry reports, or specialized directories).

The initial list was then refined, and emails were sent inviting the identified stakeholders to complete the form. Incomplete registrations were followed up every two weeks.

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<sup>1</sup>Osorio Calderon, V. (2024). Actors contributing to Evidence-Informed Policymaking in Latin America and the Caribbean (Abstract P176). University College London – EPPI Centre. In Abstracts accepted for the 2nd Global Evidence Summit, Prague, Czech Republic. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, (1 Suppl 1), p. 1083.

Finally, interviewees were selected based on the preliminary review and the Hub's priorities, applying diversity criteria (such as representation of countries and sectors of operation, for example) to ensure balanced representation. Invitations were sent by email and interviews were conducted on digital platforms.

Participation was voluntary, with explicit informed consent obtained before each interview, and with anonymized use of data in the report. Personal and organizational data were used exclusively for the purpose of mapping the HubLAC.

### *Limitations*

It is crucial to acknowledge that the findings in this report exhibit a proximity bias. The data primarily reflects the network of actors and organizations that already have a relationship or close ties with HubLAC. This characteristic of the mapped ecosystem indicates that, while we have a solid base of strategic partners, there is still a broad range of actors beyond our immediate reach that need to be integrated. Recognizing this bias allows us to identify areas for growth and motivates us to diversify our outreach strategies in future stages, seeking broader and more equitable regional representation that includes sectors and countries not yet fully integrated into this network.

## 4.4 Data Analysis

### *Analysis of the surveys (asynchronous form)*

The collected responses were analyzed descriptively and quantitatively to characterize the actors in the regional evidence ecosystem. Absolute and relative frequencies of key variables (country, type of organization, sector, areas of work, activities, use and communication of evidence) were calculated, the geographical distribution of participants was mapped, common thematic areas and interests were identified, and collaborative interests, including priority topics and projects, were synthesized. Trends in

methodologies and types of evidence used in the region were also analyzed.

#### *Analysis of the interviews (in-depth mapping)*

The interviews were analyzed using qualitative methods and systematized in analytical matrices available only to the research team. This analysis allowed for the identification of patterns, tensions, emerging themes, and examples of experiences aligned with the Hub mapping objectives, as well as the generation and use of evidence, barriers and facilitators, and opportunities for collaboration.

## 5. Results and discussion

### 5.1 Analysis of the surveys

#### 5.1.1 General characterization of the sample

The mapping exercise involved 125 participants, 123 of whom authorized the anonymous release of their responses. These 123 participants form the basis of the analysis presented throughout this report.

#### 5.1.2 Nature of organizations

Regarding the participants' sector or area of activity, the academic field predominates, mentioned by 46.3% of respondents. This is followed by the public sector with 24.4%, and civil society organizations or NGOs with 18.7%. To a lesser extent, representatives from the private sector (7.3%), think tanks (1.6%), and international organizations (1.6%) were identified.



Figure: Nature of organizations

### 5.1.3 Position or role held by the participants

The form included an open-ended question about the functions performed by the individual or organization. Responses to this question were categorized to reflect the diversity of roles within the regional EIP ecosystem. The majority of participants are involved in project coordination or management (30.9%). They are followed by specialists and consultants (22.0%) and those directly linked to academia, such as professors and students (17.9%). Research professionals (12.2%) and those performing analytical or technical advisory roles (6.5%) are also prominent. A smaller group (10.6%) did not indicate their role or stated that the question was not applicable.



Figure - Distribution of roles/positions in participating organizations

### **Considerations**

The predominance of the academic field reflects both the current composition of the evidence ecosystem and the performance profile of the LAC Hub.

Universities and research centers are typically more familiar with the production, systematization, and translation of knowledge, and they also maintain institutional relationships with public and international organizations. These factors facilitate their presence and participation in networks like the Hub.

At the same time, this data prompts reflection on the degree of coordination between different sectors and the recognition of collaborative potential. While the academic sector plays an essential role, opportunities exist to strengthen ties with civil society organizations, think tanks, and public administrators, fostering more diverse and

complementary interactions. This expansion could encourage richer exchanges and the development of initiatives that connect evidence production with concrete policy and practice demands in the region.

#### 5.1.4 Spoken languages

The mapping also revealed the linguistic diversity of the participants. A third (33.3%) reported speaking only one language, while almost half (44.7%) indicated fluency in two. 20.3% are proficient in three languages, and only 1.6% speak four. In terms of frequency, Spanish was the most cited (78.0%), followed by English (61.0%) and Portuguese (48.8%).

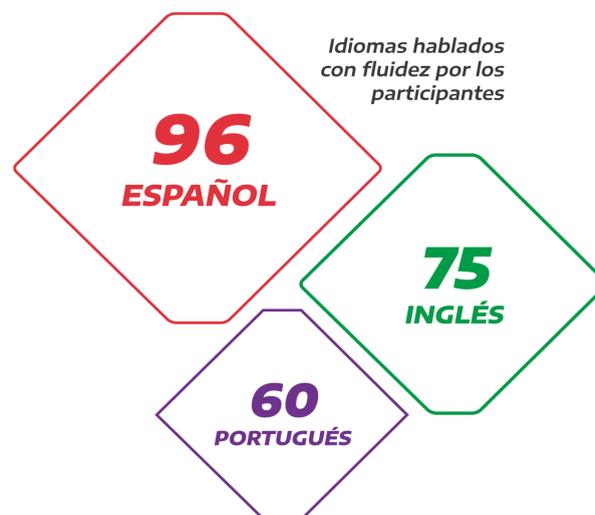


Figure - Languages spoken fluently by the participants

#### **Considerations**

The distribution of languages reflects both the linguistic diversity of the region and potential communication limitations across different contexts.

The fact that a third of the participants speak only one language suggests that, even in a regional cooperative environment, linguistic differences can restrict exchanges and collaborations.

The predominance of Spanish reflects the demographics and geography of Latin America and the Caribbean, while Portuguese and English appear significantly, linked to the population size of Brazil and Anglophone Caribbean countries. However, these data invite reflection on how the language barrier influences the circulation of evidence and the recognition of local experiences.

Similar experiences are observed in other networks, such as the African Evidence Network (AEN), which seeks to expand access to its products in the continent's main languages. The AEN's experience shows that multilingual initiatives progress best with institutional support and dedicated resources for translation, adaptation, and dissemination. In Latin America and the Caribbean, overcoming this barrier may require a collective effort that combines interest, planning, and initial investment to make regional collaboration more inclusive.

### 5.1.5 Geographical distribution of organizations

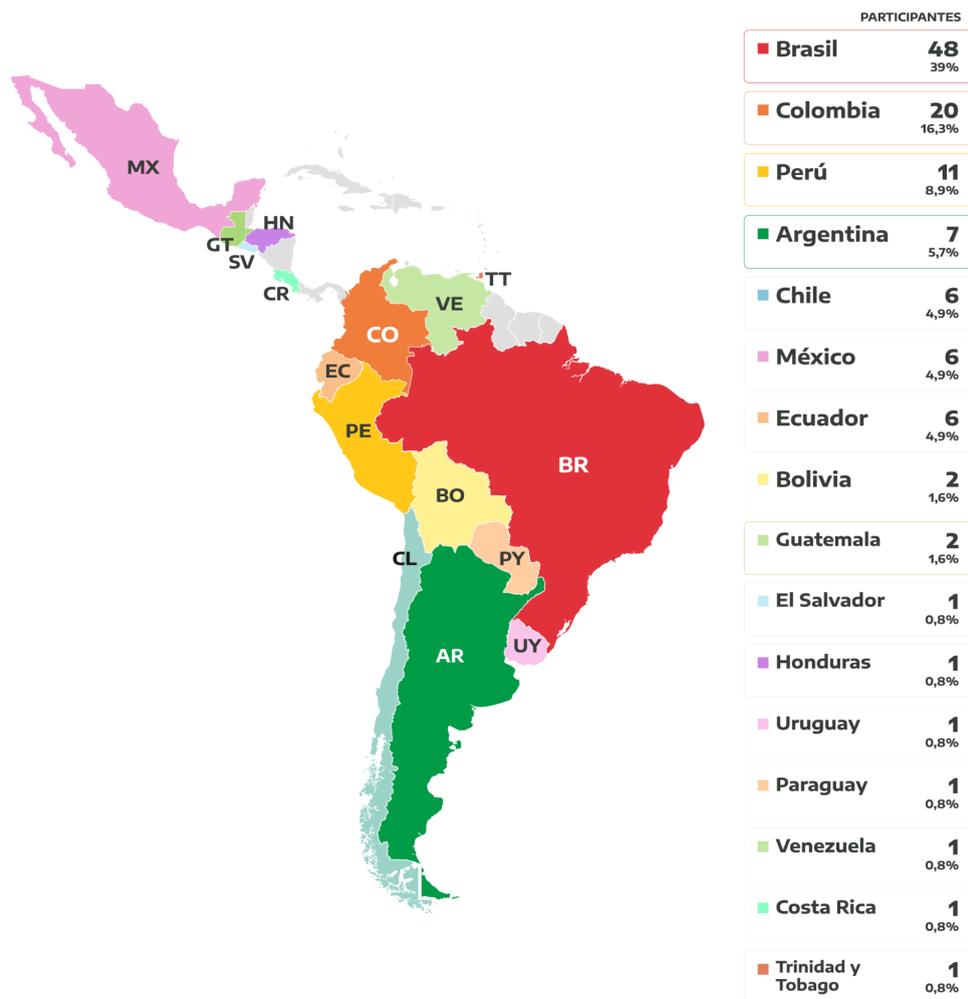
The majority of participants are concentrated in South America, with 102 of them (82.9%). Less represented are Central America and the Caribbean (13 participants, 10.6%), Europe (5; 4.1%) and North America (3; 2.4%).<sup>2</sup>

By country, Brazil (48 participants; 39.0%) and Colombia (20; 16.3%) stand out, followed by Peru (11; 8.9%) and Argentina (7; 5.7%). Other countries with similar participation are Chile, Mexico, and Ecuador (6 each; 4.9%). Bolivia, Guatemala, Spain, and the United States each have 2 participants (1.6%), while El Salvador, Honduras, Uruguay, Paraguay, Venezuela, Canada,

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<sup>2</sup> Although HubLAC focuses on Latin America and the Caribbean, the presence of European and North American organizations is explained by the geographical coverage of their projects, which may be aimed at the region and have local teams.

Costa Rica, the United Kingdom, and Trinidad and Tobago each have one participant (0.8%).



## Considerations

The results reflect the consolidation of HubLAC in South America, home to 65% of the region's population (436 million). Central America and the Caribbean account for 228 million (34%). This difference explains the

concentration of responses in the south, but also highlights the need to strengthen its presence in other subregions.

Language barriers can limit the participation of initiatives in the Caribbean and Central America, where communication is usually in Spanish or Portuguese, while English is not always present. Strengthening ties with Anglophone institutions could make the Hub more representative and integrated, which requires investment and specific strategies.

Francophone countries also deserve attention: although they represent only 2% of the regional population, they may be less integrated into knowledge production and exchange dynamics, both due to language barriers and structural inequalities. It is important to acknowledge that the lack of a French version of the form may have hindered the participation of Francophone countries in this mapping exercise.

### 5.1.6 Years of operation of the organizations

Of the participants who responded to the form, 74 (60.2%) indicated that their organizations have been operating for more than six years, 24 (19.5%) between three and six years, and 17 (13.8%) for less than three years. In 8 cases (6.5%), the length of operation was not reported.

Tiempo de  
operación de la  
organización

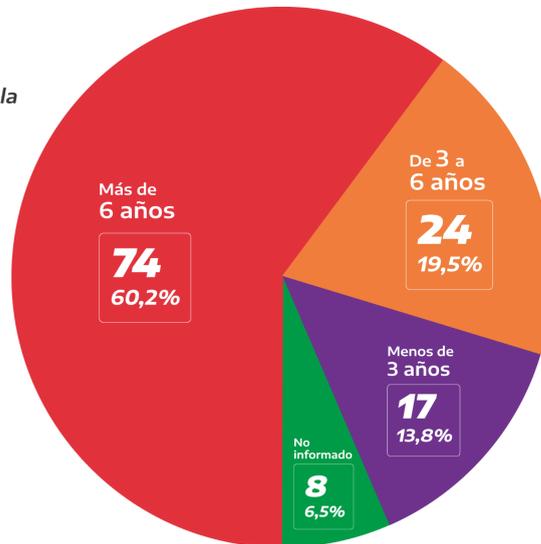


Figure - Organization's operating time

### Considerations

Among organizations older than six years (n = 74), Brazil accounts for 27 (22.0%), followed by Colombia (9; 7.3%), Peru (7; 5.7%), Argentina (6; 4.9%), and Chile (6; 4.9%). In the 3-to-6-year age group, Brazil (11; 8.9%) and Colombia (7; 5.7%) predominate, while the newest organizations (<3 years) are located in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Mexico.

In summary, the most established organizations predominate in Brazil and other South American countries. The emergence of newer organizations is particularly strong in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Mexico, while medium-sized organizations are mainly found in Brazil and Colombia.

### 5.1.7 Geographic scope of action

The majority of respondents (58; 47.2%) operate at the national level. Another 13 (10.6%) operate at the subnational or local level. A group of 25 (20.3%) carry out international or global activities, and 9 (7.3%) work at the regional level (Latin America, the Caribbean, or South America). Nine participants operate at multiple levels simultaneously (international, regional, national, and local). In 9 cases (7.3%), the scale of operation was not reported.



Figure - Geographic scope of the organization

### 5.1.8 Thematic sectors of action

The organizations participate in various sectors. The most common are health (65.9%), education (42.3%), and innovation and strengthening of public management (39.8%). Other relevant sectors include the economy

and local development (30.1%), the environment (29.3%), and human rights (27.6%). Gender (25.2%), culture (9.8%), sports and recreation (8.9%), and civil and citizen security (7.3%) are also prominent. Sectors with a smaller proportion, but still important, include agriculture and livestock (2.4%), finance, social inclusion, and food security (3.3% each), impact evaluation, research, and planning (1.6%), and open government and the rule of law (0.8%).

### **Considerations**

Although health remains the most frequently discussed topic, other sectors are gaining relevance, such as education, innovation, the economy, the environment, and human rights. The reduced presence of impact assessment, research, and planning may reflect a historical focus on policymaking, leaving less room for monitoring, evaluation, and continuous learning. Analyzing how to strengthen these later stages could consolidate a more comprehensive evidence ecosystem.

### 5.1.9 Main functions in the evidence ecosystem

Most organizations identify themselves as evidence producers (84.5%), followed by intermediaries, translators or disseminators of evidence (64.2%), and direct users or decision makers (30.9%).

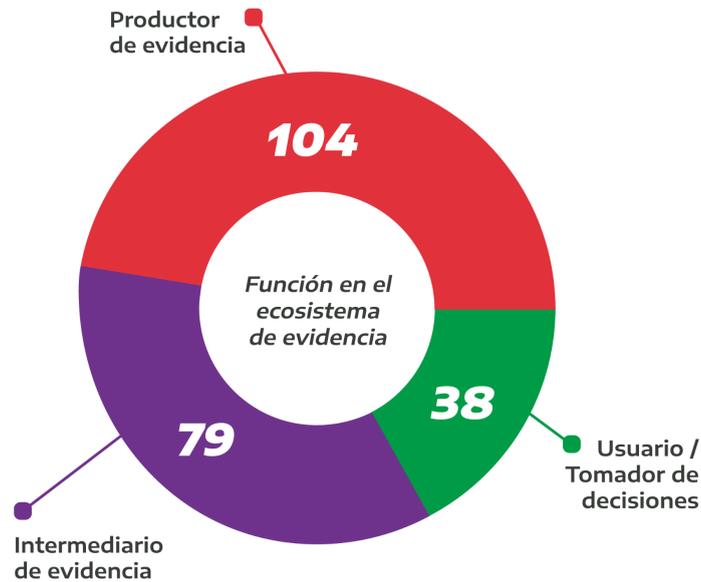


Figure: Main function in the evidence ecosystem

### 5.1.10 Services and activities developed

The most common activities are the development of syntheses and evidence maps (77.2%), literature or systematic reviews (73.2%), the production of rapid responses and policy briefs (65.0%), policy dialogues or citizen panels (55.3%), expert consultations (54.5%), interviews and qualitative studies (55.3%), and impact evaluations (53.7%). Also reported are data analysis and modeling (48.0%), quantitative research (45.5%), systematically developed guidelines (35.8%), technology assessments or cost-benefit analyses (34.1%), behavioral or implementation research (37.4%), storytelling to promote evidence (26.0%), and the Delphi method (20.3%).

### *Servicio(s) o actividad(es) principal(es) de la organización*

Síntesis de evidencia / Mapas de evidencia

**95** 

Revisiones de literatura / Revisiones sistemáticas

**90** 

Policy briefs / Respuestas rápidas

**80** 

Encuestas cualitativas (p. ej., entrevistas)

**68** 

Diálogos de política / Paneles ciudadanos

**68** 

Consulta de expertos (temporal o permanente)

**67** 

Evaluaciones de impacto / Monitoreo

**66** 

Análisis de datos / Modelado de datos

**59** 

Encuestas primarias cuantitativas

**56** 

Investigación conductual o de implementación

**46** 

Experimentales (RCTs, resultados de laboratorio)

**46** 

Guías (desarrolladas sistemáticamente)

**44** 

Evaluaciones tecnológicas / Análisis costo-beneficio

**42** 

Narración de historias para promoción de la evidencia

**32** 

Método Delphi

**25** 

Otros (productos de comunicación científica)

**1** 

Figure: Main service(s) or activity(ies) of the organization

#### 5.1.11 Main audiences served

Public administrators constitute the main target audience (70.7%), followed by researchers (59.3%), civil society (51.2%), and employees of the

Executive (39.8%), Legislative (18.7%), and Judicial (11.4%) branches. The private sector (29.3%), the media (20.3%), and isolated cases such as students, UN agencies, individual philanthropists, and professionals from Brazil's Unified Health System (SUS) are also mentioned.

**Principal(es) cliente(s) de los servicios de la organización**

- Gestores públicos
- Investigadores
- Sociedad civil
- Personal del poder ejecutivo
- Sector privado
- Medios de comunicación
- Personal del poder legislativo
- Personal del poder judicial
- Individuos / Filantropía
- Consejos de derechos de niños, niñas y adolescentes
- Estudiantes
- Cooperación internacional
- Trabajadores del SUS (sistema de salud de Brasil)
- Agencias de la ONU

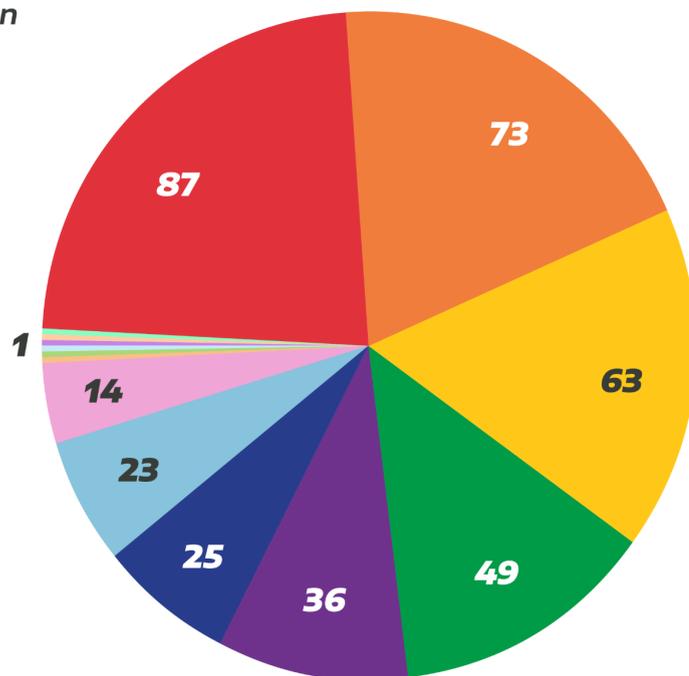


Figure: Main client(s) of the organization's services

**Considerations**

The concentration of public managers indicates a focus on supporting agile policy decisions, prioritizing rapid syntheses over in-depth research. Less common methods, such as storytelling and the Delphi method, reveal areas with innovation potential, which could broaden the

ecosystem's reach to include civil society, the private sector, and the media.

### 5.1.12 Sources of information and data

The most frequently used sources are scientific materials (86.2%), statistical databases (71.5%), legal documents (52.8%), and documentary materials such as books and newspapers (56.1%). Digital sources (43.9%), testimonials (46.3%), experimental data (37.4%), and traditional or popular knowledge (26.0%) are also used.



Figure: Main source(s) of information and/or data used

### Considerations

This mapping shows that formal sources, such as statistics, high-quality academic articles, laws, and government reports, are central, but also reveals significant use of testimonies and traditional and popular knowledge. This suggests that the ecosystem conceives of evidence from a broad perspective. It thus recognizes that the diversity of knowledge is essential for a more accurate understanding of reality and for transforming local contexts.

#### 5.1.13 Evidence Networks

When asked about their affiliation with networks, 49 participants reported actively participating, 12 stated they were not part of any network, and in 62 cases there was no information.

*¿Su organización forma parte de alguna red de evidencia?*

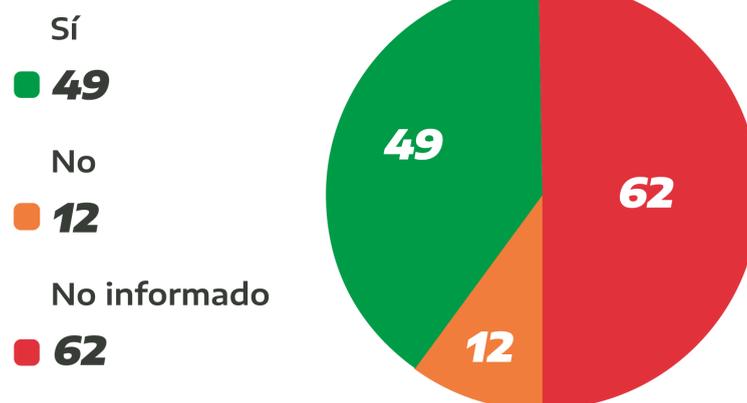


Figure: Is your organization part of any evidence network?

## **Affiliation of the organization or individuals to evidence networks**

In addition to HubLAC (hublac.org), other networks mentioned by participants were:

- **RedETSA – Health Technology Assessment Network of the Americas**

A regional network that brings together 40 institutions from 21 countries in the Americas, including ministries of health, health technology assessment (HTA) agencies, PAHO/WHO collaborating centers, and educational and research institutions.

[redetsa.bvsalud.org](http://redetsa.bvsalud.org)

- **INAHTA – International Network of Agencies for Health Technology Assessment**

International network of public health agencies, comprised of 53 organizations that connect health agencies to support the exchange of knowledge and information. [inahta.org](http://inahta.org)

- **HTAi – Health Technology Assessment International**

A global community of HTA advocates, including multidisciplinary advisors, academics, practitioners, public and private organizations, students, patients, and citizens. [htai.org/](http://htai.org/)

- **GIN – Guidelines International Network**

An international network of organizations involved in the development of clinical guidelines, promoting collaboration and the exchange of best practices. [g-i-n.net/](http://g-i-n.net/)

- **HTAsiaLink**

A network of HTA agencies in the Asia-Pacific region, comprised of 34 agencies from 17 countries, that facilitates the sharing of

information, experiences, and resources to strengthen HTA.

[htasialink.com/](https://htasialink.com/)

- **Cochrane**

An independent international network of researchers, healthcare professionals, patients, caregivers, and people working to improve health outcomes in more than 190 countries. [cochrane.org](https://www.cochrane.org)

- **Campbell Collaboration**

An international non-profit organization that produces and disseminates high-quality systematic reviews to inform social policies and programs. [campbellcollaboration.org](https://www.campbellcollaboration.org)

- **EGAP – Evidence in Governance and Politics**

A network that brings together researchers and professionals to promote the use of evidence in governance and public policy. [egap.org](https://www.egap.org)

- **National Network of Evidence in Human Rights (RENEdh)**

Brazilian network focused on promoting and protecting human rights through the use of evidence. [renedh.mdh.gov.br](https://www.renedh.mdh.gov.br)

- **Brazilian Coalition for Evidence**

Brazilian coalition seeking to strengthen the use of evidence in public policy formulation. [coalizaopelasevidencias.org.br](https://www.coalizaopelasevidencias.org.br)

- **SPOR – Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research**

A Canadian network that promotes policy-oriented research by connecting researchers, policymakers, and citizens. [cihr-irsc.gc.ca](https://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca)

- **McMaster Health Forum**

A Canadian initiative that brings together health leaders, policymakers, and citizens to promote evidence-informed

decision-making. [mcmasterforum.org](https://mcmasterforum.org)

- **Global Evidence Commission**

A global commission working to improve the use of evidence in public policy through recommendations and concrete actions.

[mcmasterforum.org/networks/evidence-commission](https://mcmasterforum.org/networks/evidence-commission)

- **RBMA – Brazilian Monitoring and Evaluation Network**

Brazilian network focused on promoting monitoring and evaluation practices in the public sector. [rbma.site](https://rbma.site)

- **Relac – Latin American and Caribbean Monitoring, Evaluation and Systematization Network**

Latin American network seeking to strengthen evaluation capacity in the public sector through collaboration and exchange of experiences. [relac.net](https://relac.net)

## 5.2 Analysis of the interviews

### 5.2.1 General Information

Nine people from seven Latin American countries were interviewed: Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Guatemala, Uruguay, Mexico, and Ecuador. The participants represent diverse fields, including academia, governmental and non-governmental organizations, with expertise in areas such as public health, human rights, social development, and public policy.

The interviewees work in different areas, mainly: four in the field of Health and Health Policies; two in Human Rights and Social Development; two in Environment and Agriculture; and one in each of the following areas: Education, New Economies and Urban Planning.

## 5.2.2 Ways in which evidence is used

In general, the experiences analyzed mobilize strategies already consolidated in the field of evidence-informed policies, such as the production of syntheses, the adaptation of formats to specific audiences, and the articulation between knowledge production and decision-making processes.

Analyzing these experiences allows us to organize the findings around some common themes, which manifest themselves in different ways depending on the context. These include evidence as a collective construction, its use in high-pressure decision-making scenarios, and the adaptation of formats and channels for different audiences.

### *1. Evidence as a collective construction*

In several countries, the use of evidence appears to be linked to collaborative arrangements between public institutions, academia, and civil society organizations. In Brazil, both the ObservaDH (Human Rights Observatory) and the development of the Evidence Notebook relied on inter-institutional contributions. Similar dynamics are observed in Colombia and Guatemala, where evidence is produced and discussed in forums for dialogue with diverse actors, including local communities and decision-makers.

### *2. Evidence in contexts of high decision-making pressure*

In several countries, the use of evidence occurred in contexts of high decision-making pressure, characterized by decisions with high political and social costs. In Bolivia, during the COVID-19 pandemic, rapid evidence syntheses and systematic reviews were used to support health decisions in a scenario of high uncertainty. In Mexico, internationally compared evidence was used to inform regulatory definitions on food labeling, in a process marked by intense public debates and strong economic interests. In both cases, evidence served as an input to reduce uncertainty and support decisions with high public scrutiny, albeit in different contexts and timeframes.

### *3. Adaptation of formats and channels*

Beyond language adaptation, the experiences analyzed show an effort to diversify formats and communication channels. Data panels, maps, educational videos, and face-to-face sessions appear in Brazil, Ecuador, Guatemala, and Uruguay as ways to make the evidence usable at different levels and institutional contexts.

### 5.2.3 Barriers and facilitators for EIP

Based on the interviews, barriers and facilitators that influence how evidence is produced, translated, circulated, and incorporated into decision-making processes were identified. These elements, based on the interviewees' accounts, were organized into three interrelated levels: individual, organizational, and political/social. At the individual level, factors associated with the capabilities, trajectories, and experiences of the individuals and teams that act as mediators between knowledge and policy are considered. At the organizational level, structures, practices, resources, and alliances that facilitate or condition the transformation of data and studies into usable inputs for decision-making are identified. Finally, at the political/social level, aspects of the legal, political, and social environment that shape the opportunities for evidence to gain meaning, legitimacy, and traction in public decision-making spaces are included.

Throughout this section, we present both success and failure case studies that describe concrete experiences of using, or attempting to use, evidence in public decision-making processes. These cases allow us to observe how evidence can have an impact when it is linked to clear institutional demands, organizational capacities, and favorable political contexts, as well as the points where this link weakens. Their inclusion aims to complement the analysis of barriers and facilitators with situated narratives that show how these factors manifest in practice.

### 5.2.3.1 Individual level

At this level, the narratives focus on the training, professional experience, and technical skills of the people who produce, articulate, or use evidence in decision-making processes, as well as the working conditions that influence their performance.

#### *Career path, professional training and technical skills*

The interviewees report backgrounds and skills related to public policy, monitoring, and advanced academic research. Taken together, these profiles shape the real possibilities for producing and applying evidence in diverse institutional contexts.

The case of one of the interviewees from Brazil illustrates this dynamic: his team has a solid academic background and prior experience in health and social development portfolios. However, this example also reveals that high academic qualifications do not always guarantee mastery of the specific tools of Evidence-Informed Policy (EIP). In the Brazilian team, the need for further training in synthesis and mapping led to technical inconsistencies and demonstrated that the late addition of consultants can compromise the consistency of the work.

Thus, the experience of these actors suggests that specialized technical training is key to transforming individual capacity into an effective institutional impact.

### 5.2.3.2 Organizational level

This level encompasses elements associated with the structures, practices, and institutional arrangements from which evidence is produced, translated, and circulated in decision-making processes. The narratives show that organizations operate as spaces of mediation between knowledge and policy, where resources, time, institutional cultures, and inter-institutional relationships converge. At this level, interviewees

describe both conditions that broaden the scope of evidence and situations that limit its reach, depending on how internal processes and external alliances are organized.

### *Resources, financing and institutional continuity*

In several accounts, the availability of financial and material resources is linked to the ability to support teams, access data, develop evidence products, and maintain working networks over time. At the same time, scenarios are described in which budget constraints create tensions that threaten the continuity of these initiatives, especially when they depend on one-off funding or short-term projects.

From the perspective of the interviewee from Mexico, the ongoing search for funding is part of the daily work of organizations operating in the field of evidence-informed research, both in the public sector and in civil society. Similarly, one of the interviewees from Brazil points out that the limited availability of resources restricts the possibility of activating mechanisms such as research calls or network-strengthening initiatives. At the local level, the interviewee from Ecuador describes how funding from municipal budgets allows for a more direct alignment of evidence production with the city's management priorities.

“One of the main problems [...] is the financial aspect; finding funding is always an issue for many organizations, both governmental and civil society.” (Interviewee from Mexico)  
“Funding through the municipal budget ensures that the work is fully aligned with the city's needs, the government plan, and the priorities of the various departments.” (Interviewee from Ecuador)

These experiences show how financing is not only linked to the availability of material inputs, but also to organizational stability and the ability to sustain knowledge translation processes over time.

### *Institutional articulation and networking*

Another recurring theme in the narratives concerns inter-institutional alliances as a way to expand capacities, share information, and generate common frameworks for the use of evidence. Interviewees describe networks, agreements, and coordination mechanisms that connect public institutions, academia, social organizations, and, in some cases, international actors.

The interviewee from Guatemala describes the construction of networks aimed at generating and sharing information among organizations and communities. Meanwhile, one of the testimonies from Brazil highlights that the support of other government entities and research centers is fundamental, as it not only strengthens the institutional structure but also facilitates the development of technical and organizational capacities. In other cases, collaborations emerging from professional environments or digital platforms are mentioned, enabling methodological exchanges and new working relationships. (One of the interviewees from Brazil).

“[...] to create a network of organizations that work with evidence in the area. My idea is to start generating information, sharing it... to create information ecosystems that help in decision-making, not only for the organization but also for the communities.” (Interviewee from Guatemala)

These dynamics show how inter-institutional coordination shapes an environment in which evidence circulates beyond isolated units, generating shared learning effects and expanding opportunities for dialogue with policy.

**Illustrative case – Co-creation and coordination through the National Human Rights Evidence Network (ReneDH) (Brazil)**

One of the interviewees from Brazil describes the National Human Rights

Evidence Network as a collaborative platform bringing together public institutions, academia, and civil society organizations that had previously worked in a fragmented manner. Within this framework, the first Human Rights Evidence Notebook was developed, based on collaboratively constructed summaries aligned with priorities defined in conjunction with the ministry's technical departments. The interviewee associates the experience with a progressive strengthening of institutional capacities and an expansion of the range of actors involved in the production and use of evidence.

### *Internal processes, bureaucracy, and institutional timelines*

The accounts also refer to the administrative and bureaucratic processes that frame the production and circulation of evidence within public organizations. In some contexts, institutional timelines are presented as lengthy and poorly synchronized with the pace of political decision-making, which affects the validity and updating of the products produced.

One interviewee from Brazil mentions lengthy editorial processes that keep evidence products awaiting approval for years, while the interviewee from Colombia describes public procurement systems with low risk tolerance, which hinder the adoption of new methodologies. In Bolivia, the interviewee points to recurring difficulties in accessing up-to-date data, even though formal frameworks for access to information exist.

These elements show how administrative timelines and internal rules are part of the organizational environment in which evidence gains, or loses, the capacity to have an impact.

**Illustrative case – Production of evidence with limited use in subsequent decision-making processes (Brazil and Mexico)**

One of the interviewees from Brazil and the interviewee from Mexico recounted experiences developing maps and syntheses of evidence in response to explicit requests from ministries of health. These products involved a significant investment of time and specialized technical skills. However, their accounts indicate that changes in government, prolonged administrative cycles, and lengthy editorial processes affected the circulation and updating of these products, resulting in a limited connection to subsequent decisions. This experience illustrates the importance of aligning evidence products with the specific rhythms of decision-making processes.

*Organizational structures and knowledge translation*

Finally, some accounts highlight the presence of specific institutional structures, such as observatories, data platforms, or technical units, geared towards public communication and knowledge translation. These structures appear to be associated with practices such as the use of visualizations, data narratives, and formats accessible to diverse audiences.

From the perspective of one of the interviewees from Brazil, these infrastructures allow evidence to circulate both within the public administration and towards society and the media, expanding its spheres of use and legitimacy.

**Illustrative case – ObservaDH and the institutional use of evidence in human rights (Brazil)**

According to one of the interviewees from Brazil, the National Observatory for Human Rights (ObservaDH) has established itself as a

platform for analyzing and disseminating public data from a human rights perspective. Through dashboards, visualizations, and data narratives, the evidence produced is used by the ministry's technical teams, senior management, and the media, serving as input for official presentations, seminars, and international dialogue. The data was also incorporated as a reference in the design of the Visible Streets Plan, following a decision by the Supreme Federal Court.

#### 5.2.3.3 Political/social level

This level encompasses factors within the institutional, political, and social environment that influence the use of evidence in public decision-making. Changes in government, partisan priorities, legal frameworks, bureaucracy, economic resources, and the culture of valuing evidence shape both opportunities and constraints for the production, dissemination, and application of scientific information.

##### *Political context and windows of opportunity*

The political climate is presented in the accounts as a factor that can influence both the openness to using evidence and the level of risk perceived by those who produce it. According to the testimonies, the disposition of the authorities and the stability of the institutional environment appear to condition the possibilities for integrating scientific knowledge with public decision-making.

In certain contexts, technical evidence may face ideological barriers. Some accounts suggest that when scientific production is primarily external, there is a risk that it will be perceived as an imposition foreign to local cultural or political frameworks. This situation can lead to resistance to robust methodologies based on arguments of autonomy or sovereignty of knowledge.

“Here you can’t show any scientific evidence to a government decision-maker, because there’s a kind of denial of everything

scientific [...] something will tell you that you're a colonizer or that you're coming here to impose ideas from outside."  
(Interviewee from Bolivia)

Political instability and legal proceedings appear to be causing academic and institutional actors to withdraw. Testimonies indicate that, in climates of high polarization or crisis, the fear of legal or political reprisals could discourage technical collaboration. This "preservation strategy" becomes more evident during periods of tension or changes in government, where participation in public policy processes can be seen as a factor of personal vulnerability.

"We asked for help from academic and research institutions [...] and nobody wanted to help. The political context was so ugly that they would tell you: 'I don't want to get involved, I'll end up in court.'" (Interviewee from Bolivia)

In sum, these dynamics suggest that the use of evidence depends not only on its technical quality, but also on a political ecosystem that enables or limits the security and legitimacy of the actors involved.

### **Illustrative case – Difficulties in sustaining evidence-informed interventions (Bolivia and Guatemala)**

According to the interviewees from Bolivia and Guatemala, both countries implemented technically sound interventions that faced challenges in their long-term sustainability. In Bolivia, the account refers to a public health intervention that included monitoring and evaluation. In Guatemala, the account describes productive and environmental initiatives implemented at the municipal and territorial levels.

In both contexts, interviewees indicated that factors such as turnover in authorities, opposition from influential social actors, and discontinuity in funding affected the sustainability of the interventions and limited their potential for scaling up. The accounts show how, even with sound technical designs, environmental conditions influence the continuity of

evidence-informed actions.

### **Illustrative case – Partial progress in the institutionalization of an evidence center (Brazil)**

Within the framework of the implementation of the National Human Rights Evidence Network (ReneDH), one of the interviewees from Brazil mentioned the creation of a standardized evidence center as one of the objectives of the network's first cycle. According to the account, the process progressed through conceptual definition, stakeholder mobilization, and the development of a work plan aimed at its institutionalization.

However, the interviewee points out that changes in political leadership and institutional reconfigurations influenced the pace and continuity of the initiative. In this sense, the evidence center remains an ongoing process, which has generated relevant lessons for later stages, but has not yet achieved stable institutional consolidation.

#### *Legal frameworks, bureaucracy, and access to information*

Institutional and legal frameworks exert a decisive, and often dual, effect on the evidence ecosystem. On the one hand, clear laws act as facilitators; such is the case in Uruguay, where a framework exists that "guarantees the right to access public information." However, regulatory gaps or administrative rigidity frequently become structural barriers.

These obstacles manifest themselves primarily at three levels:

1. **Obstacles in hiring and financing:** Changes or complexity in regulations hinder project implementation. In Ecuador, modifications to the public procurement law complicated the co-financing of studies, while in Colombia, the procurement system is reported to "hinder innovation and the implementation of new methodologies."

2. **Slowness in the processes:** Excessive bureaucracy affects the timeliness of evidence. A critical case is observed in Brazil, where an evidence summary intended for a ministry took "four years to be released" due to administrative obstacles.
3. **Data and infrastructure gap:** Institutional weakness directly impacts the quality of information. In Bolivia, the lack of a digital data protection law prevented the implementation of tablet-based data collection systems, compounded by the fact that "there is no institutional framework for data resources." A similar situation exists in Guatemala, where the absence of systematized information consumes valuable resources, and in Ecuador, where there is a perceived "weakening of the national statistics office."

### *Social participation and international exchange*

Beyond legal frameworks, the effective application of evidence depends on the ability of actors to coordinate. The creation of networks where civil society and academia collaborate closely is evident, generating opportunities for mutual learning.

In Uruguay, for example, the capacity of feminist organizations and research centers to mobilize gender and childhood issues is noteworthy. A significant milestone was the creation of the CAIF Plan (Centers for Attention to Children and Families), a policy that arose not from government demand, but from the initiative of civil society with support from international cooperation. In this case, the combination of technical rigor, robust nutritional data, and the prestige of leaders with the capacity for political dialogue enabled a "virtuous circle" that translated knowledge into an institutional reality that persists to this day.

This exchange of knowledge is not only local, but transcends borders through transnational learning. Countries adapt successful experiences from their neighbors instead of starting from scratch. A clear example is front-of-package food labeling:

"The Mexican [labeling] system was developed based on Chile's... later Argentina adopted the Mexican system and improved upon it... the idea is not for each country to develop its best strategies in isolation." (Interviewee from Mexico)

Despite structural challenges, ecosystem actors seek key moments to make an impact. As one participant from Brazil points out, sometimes "all it takes is a small window of opportunity" to demonstrate "how evidence can be useful and effective."

### **Illustrative case - Evidence-informed territorial planning: Child Development Centers (Quito)**

According to the interviewee from Ecuador, the redefinition of the location of the Child Development Centers (CDIs) in Quito was based on a methodology that considered demographic data, extreme poverty, and pedestrian accessibility isochrones. The analysis identified overlaps between the municipal and national offerings, as well as areas with coverage deficits.

The evidence produced was used to guide decisions regarding the redistribution of resources, with the aim of improving territorial equity and optimizing the use of public resources. This case demonstrates the value of geospatial evidence as input for operational and planning decisions at the local level.

## 6. Funders

The interviews show that the initiatives analyzed rely on a combination of public resources, international cooperation, private donations, and multilateral funding. Each type of funding offers opportunities but also

presents limitations for the implementation and sustainability of evidence-informed policies.

### *Public resources*

Several interviewees mentioned government funding as central to maintaining their activities, linking the financing to institutional priorities and government plans. These resources allow for the continuity of certain programs, but in some cases, limitations in scope and availability are perceived, affecting the planning and execution of activities.

For example, in Brazil, the network has limited budgetary resources, which restricts the number of calls for proposals and the availability of staff. Similarly, in Mexico and Ecuador, the teams rely primarily on government funding, although they seek to supplement it with other resources for specific projects. (Interviewees from Mexico and Ecuador)

### *International cooperation and multilateral financing*

Several interviewees mentioned international cooperation and contributions from multilateral organizations as key support for technical, methodological, and institutional development projects. This cooperation includes funding from international agencies and specific countries, as well as organizations such as the IDB, CAF, UNDP, UNICEF, FAO, and IFAD.

### *Individual and private donors*

Some interviewees mention contributions from individual donors or international foundations, which can supplement institutional resources. The magnitude of these contributions varies considerably.

For example, in Guatemala, external donors represent a smaller percentage of total funding, while the majority of resources come from within the country.

## 7. Networks and alliances

The initiatives analyzed operate within a diverse network of cooperation that integrates civil society actors, academic institutions, government agencies, and international entities. These alliances are not limited to funding; they contribute knowledge, technical and methodological support, and data exchange, strengthening both the generation of evidence and its application in public policy.

In various contexts, national networks are combined with regional and international networks, facilitating learning between countries and the articulation of standards, methodologies, and best practices. Academic institutions play a prominent role in the co-creation of studies, the training of specialized talent, and the systematization of evidence, while civil society organizations and productive actors contribute to the dissemination of results and to linking research with concrete needs in the territory.

While networks are a strategic resource, their effectiveness depends on the availability of resources and the capacity of the actors to maintain sustained collaboration. Some accounts show that, although formal links exist, a lack of staff, time, or funding limits the implementation of joint activities, demonstrating that the density and depth of networks vary according to the institutional and territorial context. Overall, networks and alliances are a key element for strengthening the institutionalization of evidence use and facilitating the translation of knowledge into policy.

## 8. Final considerations

The Hub recognizes that its priorities must reflect the needs and recommendations identified in the region. During the mapping process, interviewees highlighted the importance of expanding networks of stakeholders, diversifying areas of collaboration, and creating effective



knowledge-sharing mechanisms, so that the evidence is more useful and relevant for decision-making in different contexts.

Consequently, the Hub's next steps are geared towards strengthening the evidence ecosystem in Latin America and the Caribbean, consolidating inclusive networks, promoting thematic and geographic diversity, and facilitating spaces for dialogue and mutual learning. As one participant pointed out, it is important to shift the focus from the "supply" of evidence to "how we can be more useful" to decision-makers by better understanding their needs.

The importance of identifying strategic alliances and creating active opportunities for dialogue and mutual learning is also emphasized. In the words of one interviewee, "the more diverse and multilateral the collaborative environment, the more useful it will be," especially if it encompasses different themes and contexts. The importance of facilitating the systematic exchange of information and experiences is also highlighted, as is making each team's internal expertise available, which enriches the Hub as a shared learning platform.

Finally, the interviewees emphasize the need to align evidence generation systems among members to effectively share accumulated experience: "It is crucial to align evidence generation systems among members in order to effectively share the experience accumulated over years of work."

This mapping is not intended to be a static snapshot, but rather an aspirational roadmap for the future of HubLAC. By analyzing the identified structural patterns, our vision is to move from the diagnostic phase toward the effective mobilization of the ecosystem. We are inspired by the possibility of evolving from simply identifying actors to consolidating a more cohesive and resilient network. These reflections provide a valuable framework to guide HubLAC's path in the coming years, strengthening collaboration, thematic diversity, and the application of evidence to public policy in Latin America and the Caribbean.



## Acknowledgments

At the end of a mapping exercise like this, carried out by several people and thanks to the generosity of so many participants (both in the form stage and in the interviews), it is impossible to conclude this report without expressing our gratitude to each of the people who dedicated their valuable time so that we can have a picture of the current state of the evidence-informed policy ecosystem in our beloved region, Latin America and the Caribbean.

Therefore, a sincere and resounding "thank you very much"

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- ★ Finally, we would also like to express our gratitude for the dialogue generated by the presentation of the preliminary results of this mapping project in Benin, during the event hosted by the Africa Evidence Network and the African Center for Equitable Development (ACED). This exchange was particularly valuable for planning the next steps in our work, as it opened up opportunities for collaboration, such as interest in translating the form into French, which will facilitate data collection in French-speaking countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as interest in conducting a mapping project in French-speaking countries of Africa.

We hope that this mapping will help us to know and recognize each other even more as an ecosystem and that it will mobilize our desires and possibilities to learn and grow together.

