

PEP Policy Briefs

Guidelines and instructions for PEP researchers

All PEP-supported researchers must submit a draft policy brief. You should do this while writing and publishing your PEP working paper. Completion of a satisfactory policy brief is a condition for payment of the working paper grant.

We recommend you submit a draft policy brief before you commence your dissemination activities and when/if you apply for a national policy conference grant, as it will be an invaluable tool.

What is a policy brief?

A policy brief is a two- or three-page, non-technical, visually attractive, **summary of your policy messages and (policy-oriented) research outcomes**.

Policy briefs are intended for policymakers, policy advisors, stakeholders/research users. You may also send yours to journalists/the media, to share with the general public. These people are generally busy and not familiar with scientific and technical terms.

A good policy brief will:

- Highlight an urgent policy issue that needs to be addressed
- Outline recommendations (policy solutions) that can help address the issue
- Provide evidence as to why these recommendations should be applied
- Provide policymakers with the key information necessary to formulate sound policy

PEP policy briefs are published on the [PEP website](#) and are read by researchers and donors, as well as journalists and policy stakeholders. PEP will use your brief to promote your research outcomes via the PEP website, newsletter, and social networks.

Once you have your PEP policy brief (in English) you can then translate it into your country's official language and **adapt the contents (messages) to the audiences you most want to reach**; see Dissemination for more information.

Instructions

In collaboration with you, PEP communications staff will edit and format your team's policy brief.

- Please submit a **SHORT** (maximum 1500 words) **draft text** for your policy brief
 - Draft a Word (.doc/.docx) document using the structure described on page 2.
 - Upload your document under "Policy Briefs" to the "Documents" section on the [PEP intranet](#) page for your project.
- Include at least one **illustration** (self-explanatory graphic, infographic, figure, or table) to support your argument
 - Upload as a separate image (.jpg/.png) or Excel (.xls/.xlsx) file under "Other" to the "Documents" section on the [PEP intranet](#) page for your project.
- If possible, include one or two appropriate **photos** that you have the rights to use
 - Upload as a separate image (.jpg/.png) file under "Other" to the "Documents" section on the [PEP intranet](#) page for your project.



Content and structure

Your draft PEP policy brief should use the following structure:

1. Key messages
 - a) Two to four bullet points summarizing your key findings and policy messages
 - b) It is easier to write this after you have finished your main text
2. Background/context (maximum 300 words)
 - a) Present the issue
 - b) Show the knowledge gap/need for evidence
3. Research questions and brief methodology (maximum 250 words)
 - a) State your research questions, aims, and approach
 - i. You might wish to include the data source and key methodology
4. Key findings (maximum 400 words)
 - a) Summarize your most pertinent and interesting findings
 - b) Demonstrate the quality and credibility of your research
 - c) Include simple illustrative statistics
 - d) Include a simple chart, table, figure or infographic to illustrate your findings
5. Conclusions and policy messages (maximum 550 words)
 - a) This the core section of the brief, it provides the information most relevant and useful to the policy actors
 - b) Provide clear and actionable policy messages, adapted to your audience
 - i. Be as specific as possible, taking into account the policy context of your research
 - c) Must be based on your findings

See the section on “How to communicate research” from the [Dissemination and Communication workshop presentation](#) for more advice on how to write a policy brief.

Note that your policy brief will include a direct reference to your PEP working paper so that interested readers can easily access more information about your research and methodologies.

Dissemination

A [2007 ODI/SciDev.Net study](#) found that 50% of policymakers point to insufficient dissemination of research findings to explain poor research uptake. PEP strongly encourages ALL team members to widely and enthusiastically **disseminate** the PEP policy brief to **strategic recipients** (refer to your team's Dissemination Strategy) within your country, and region, if appropriate. You should also disseminate the brief via your professional networks as this will provide exposure and help build your reputation as an expert in your field.

Report all specific dissemination actions in the Dissemination section of your project technical report on the [PEP intranet](#). Make sure to include any examples of your target audiences sharing your brief, research findings, or policy messages.

You should also reformat, rebrand the policy brief according to your own institution's standards, and translate (if applicable) the brief for dissemination through your institution's channels. When you do so, you must include the following **acknowledgment** in full (translated, if necessary):

This work was carried out with financial and scientific support from the Partnership for Economic Policy (PEP), with funding from the Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom (or UK Aid), and the Government of Canada through the International Development Research Centre (IDRC).