

EMBEDDING ECOSYSTEM SERVICES INTO POLICY (EESP)

LEARNING SERIES

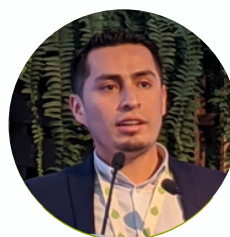
Session 5: Developing Policy Briefs with Ecosystem Service Assessments Results

Day 1

about this session

This session will define and distinguish policy briefs from scientific articles, and will deep dive into the process of developing effective briefs. First, the planning phase will be discussed, emphasizing on identifying a clear purpose and audience for the brief. Second, the structure and key elements of a policy brief will be shared. Next, the editing and review process will be discussed. Finally, the use of evidence and data will be discussed in detail, with a focus on the importance of using visualizations to effectively communicate the results, and considerations and methods to develop effective visualizations.

Keywords: Policy brief, evidence-based decision-making, data visualization



Boris Ochoa-Tocachi

ATUK Consultants

 boris@atuk.com.ec

Boris F. Ochoa-Tocachi, PhD in Hydrology, is the CEO of ATUK Consultoría Estratégica and founder of the Institute for Applied Sustainability Research (iiasur). He specializes in mountain hydrology, hydrological monitoring, and ecosystem service management. As a scientific advisor for Forest Trends, he works on the "Natural Infrastructure for Water Security" project in Peru. Boris has published 40+ scientific articles, delivered 100+ presentations, and received 10 prizes and awards. His current research focuses on nature-based solutions, natural infrastructure, and engineering options for water security.

learning objectives

- Gain skills in translating research results into practical and actionable formats.
- Develop effective communication strategies for presenting complex data and findings to policymakers and decision-makers.
- Understand techniques to minimize bias in data for informed decision-making.

Embedding Ecosystem Services into Policy (EESP) Learning Series

Developing Policy Briefs: Informing Policies with Ecosystem and Landscape Assessment Results

Boris F. Ochoa-Tocachi, PhD

ATUK Consultoría Estratégica



THE WORLD BANK

Environment, Natural Resources & Blue Economy



GPS

Global Program
on Sustainability

Developing Policy Briefs:

Informing Policies with Ecosystem and
Landscape Assessment Results

Boris F. Ochoa-Tocachi, PhD
ATUK Consultoría Estratégica

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OBJECTIVES

- To inform decisions and exchange experiences around decision making and developing policy briefs.
- To strengthen the technical capacity around the use of freshwater modelling and understanding results to inform decisions and developing policy briefs.

CONTENT

WHAT IS (AND IS NOT) A POLICY BRIEF?



PLANNING



FORMAT



DESIGN



REVISION



USE AND EVALUATION



Scientific article



AAAS Become a Member

Science Contents News Careers Journals

The global tree restoration potential

Jean-Francois Bastin^{1,2}, Yelena Finegold², Claude Garcia^{3,4}, Danilo Mollicone², Marcelo Rezende², Devin Routh...

See all authors and affiliations

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Tree planting 'has mind-blowing potential' to tackle climate crisis

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Media bouncing



World Canada Local Politics Money Health Entertainment Lifestyle

ENVIRONMENT

The most effective way to fight climate change is to plant trees, over a trillion of them: study

By Seth Borenstein · The Associated Press
Posted July 4, 2019 3:48 pm

Opinion blogs



Mashable SE Asia VIDEO ENTERTAINMENT CULTURE TECH SCIENCE SOCIAL GOOD

Science

There's a solution to climate change. Plant more trees.

Social media



virgiliocontrado @virgiliocontrado

Replying to @StarGTANews

more tree need to planted. everywhere trees can be planted they should be. #planttreessaveearth!! in the cores of towns and in the cities all the way into forests.

Why do we need to communicate and report correctly?

- We need to measure and communicate accurately any research implications and impacts to avoid the “broken telephone” effect and to transmit trust to stakeholders and donors.



POLICY BRIEF



What are the Benefits of Subsidized Early Childcare? Evidence from Kenya.

Providing subsidized early childcare in an urban African shire area can produce important benefits, like increasing maternal employment and earnings, indirectly allowing mothers to attend school and improve younger children's health and cognitive development leading to higher lifetime earnings. These benefits of subsidized childcare far outweigh the costs.

WHAT'S AT STAKE?

Previous research shows that females associated with the subsidized care seek education (ECE) greatly exceed in size. A study of early education program by the ECE, for example, found a 72% increase in maternal employment and earnings. In the study, the ECE program was conducted in high-density urban areas. Our study is the first to show benefits on mothers' earnings because of better income realization of ECE programs and challenges to increasing benefits.

KEY RESULTS

- Mothers who seek subsidized childcare are less likely to be employed and earn less.
- Attending daycare for 12 months allows mothers to attend school and improve their children's health and cognitive development.
- Subsidized childcare may increase school enrollment for older siblings.
- The benefits associated with providing subsidized childcare are outweighed by the costs.

POLICY BRIEF



Picturing Change Through PhotoVoice: Participatory Evaluation of a Daycare Intervention in Kenya.

PhotoVoice is a useful tool to see the impacts of development projects "through the eyes" of individuals who are marginalized by society and by traditional research practices. The awareness benefits of subsidized childcare for mothers and their children is captured in this PhotoVoice evaluation of a daycare intervention in Kenya.

WHAT'S AT STAKE?

In a study throughout sub-Saharan Africa, children's largely invisibility of mothers and other female family members, which can limit their development options. For this program, the women seek to engage their children's education and child care. Knowledge of their own needs to seek employment opportunities and to gain the income and contribute to their households. This, however, is not always possible because of many reasons.

KEY RESULTS

- From a study, mothers who seek childcare are less likely to be employed and earn less.
- A reduced number of children who are malnourished in the study.
- Children's support to education and health care.
- Employment opportunities for the mothers who seek childcare.
- The physical and mental well-being of family members are improved.
- There is a need to increase the income and to seek to follow up.

POLICY BRIEF



Can Subsidized Early Child Care Promote Women's Employment? Evidence from Kenya.

Women's disproportionate child care responsibilities significantly impede their labor force participation. Subsidizing child care for women in poor employment outcomes and reduce gender inequality in Africa.

WHAT'S AT STAKE?

Studies from North America, Europe, and Latin America show that child care responsibilities reduce women's labor force participation, and decrease their earnings. Poor employment outcomes affect their children's development. The study finds that subsidized childcare can help women in poor employment outcomes and reduce gender inequality in Africa. To test whether child care subsidies can help women find employment in poor employment outcomes, the study conducted a randomized controlled trial in Kenya. The study found that women who received subsidized childcare had higher employment outcomes and higher earnings than those who did not receive the subsidy.

KEY RESULTS

- Mothers who seek to have their children in early childcare are less likely to be employed and earn less.
- Mothers who received subsidized childcare are more likely to be employed and earn more.
- Mothers who received subsidized childcare are more likely to attend school and improve their children's health and cognitive development.
- Subsidizing child care can help women in poor employment outcomes and reduce gender inequality in Africa.
- Child care subsidies can help women find employment in poor employment outcomes and reduce gender inequality in Africa.



What is a policy brief?

- A policy brief is a **KEY TOOL** to present research and recommendations to a **NON-SPECIALIZED AUDIENCE**.
- They serve as a vehicle to help in the creation of **EVIDENCE-BASED** policies and to support informed **DECISION MAKING**.
- A good policy brief **DISTILLS** research findings, it **ELEVATES** them to a simpler language and find **CLEAR LINKS** to policy initiatives.
- The best policy briefs are **STAND-ALONE, CLEAR AND CONCISE** documents that focus on a single topic.



What is NOT a policy brief?

- A policy brief is NOT A “TRANSLATION” simple and direct from a scientific article.
- It is NOT an instrument of PROPAGANDA and EGO for an institution, a research group or specific people.
- It is NOT A PLAIN or FORCED VERSION of a research WITHOUT CLEAR LINKS to policy or WITHOUT RECOMMENDATIONS for decision making.
- It is NOT A COMPILATION of research, WITHOUT A clear policy PURPOSE.
- It has NO ACADEMIC JARGON, nor it is DIFFICULT TO READ for a non-specialized audience.

What is policy (not politics)?

- Policy is the set of activities associated to DECISION MAKING within a group and other forms of POWER RELATIONSHIPS between individuals.
- It is also the art, doctrine or practice that refers to the government of states, promoting CITIZEN PARTICIPATION having the capacity to DISTRIBUTE AND EXECUTE POWER as necessary to ensure a COMMON WELLBEING in society.



POLICY BRIEF

VS

SCIENTIFIC ARTICLE

- A policy brief is more “PROFESSIONAL” because it is geared towards readers who have a limited amount of time to make a practical decision.
- Policy briefs are front-loaded: the conclusions are on the front page!
- The frontpage of a policy brief needs an executive summary, providing a concise (1 or 2 paragraphs) overview of the brief’s aim and core recommendations.
- The main purpose of a policy brief is to convince the target audience of the urgency of a current problem and the need to adopt the preferred alternative or course of action outlined and, therefore, serve as an impetus for action.

- A research paper is more “ACADEMIC” because it pays more attention to the scholarly roots of particular arguments and judges their merit on intellectual and logical criteria.
- Research papers are rear-loaded: results and conclusions are towards the end of their content.
- The frontpage of a scientific article contains an “abstract” of usually one paragraph of 100 to 300 words that puts more emphasis on the used methods and in the obtained results.
- The main purpose of a scientific article is to present new knowledge. It is targeted to specialists in the academic area(s) of the research, and it is peer-reviewed. Peer-review evaluated the consistency and robustness of the methods and arguments used in the analysis of results.



CHARACTERISTICS OF A PERSUASIVE AND EFFECTIVE POLICY BRIEF

- As with all good marketing tools, the key for success is **TARGETING THE PARTICULAR AUDIENCE** of your message.
- The most common audience for a policy brief is the decision-maker, but it is also not unusual to use the document to support broader advocacy initiatives targeting a wide but knowledgeable audience (e.g., decision makers, journalists, diplomats, administrators, researchers).
- In constructing a policy brief that can effectively serve its intended purpose, it needs to be:

FOCUSED

PROFESSIONAL,
NOT ACADEMIC

EVIDENCE-
BASED

LIMITED

SUCCINT

UNDERSTANDABLE

ACCESSIBLE

PROMOTIONAL

PRACTICAL
AND FEASIBLE





PLANNING

- Key elements in an effective policy brief:

PURPOSE

AUDIENCE

CONTENT

STRUCTURE





PURPOSE

- To inform readers of a particular issue, suggest possible policy options, and make recommendations.
- Be upfront about the purpose from the start:
 - Maintain a laser focus on your direction
 - Communicate the urgency of the issue.
 - Focus on the benefits and advantages of following your policy advice.





Tips on purpose

- Write out your purpose BEFORE drafting a brief to ensure that everything you write serves that purpose.
- Stay focused on the specific problem you're trying to solve.

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AUDIENCE

- Policy briefs should be accessible and targeted to a specific audience.
- Before you begin writing, establish:
 - who your prospective readers are;
 - their interest in and level of knowledge of the subject;
 - the information they will need to make a decision;
 - their openness to your recommendations.





CONTENT

- A policy brief should be clear, succinct, and focus on a single topic.





Tips on content

- A SHORT brief does not exceed 1,500 words or two pages in length.
- A LONG brief does not exceed 3,000 words or 6-8 pages in length.
- Avoid tangents or being overly descriptive about methodology.
- Draft a NEW purpose-driven policy instead of summarizing or cutting down an existing report.
- Use PLAIN language.





STRUCTURE

- The structure should lead the reader from problem to solution.
- Be clear about your policy recommendations and how they are supported by evidence.
- It should be audience-specific and reflect each audience's interests.





Tips on structure

- Some typical section headings are summary, context, analysis/discussion, considerations, conclusion/recommendation.





FORMAT

- There is no one-size-fits-all approach to writing policy briefs because the topic and audience will shape each one.
- Effective policy briefs tend to contain the same KEY elements and therefore have similar structures.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW AND
IMPORTANCE OF THE
PROBLEM

EXAMINATION OF THE
FINDINGS AND OPTIONS

POLICY
RECOMMENDATIONS





Executive Summary



Increasing women's support for democracy in Africa

Democracy is generally seen as a force for good, but women in sub-Saharan Africa are less likely to support democracy than men. Research shows how discriminatory social institutions — including biases in family law and civil liberties and gaps in protections against physical violence — are contributing to this gap.

WHAT'S AT STAKE?

Despite progress in recent years, women in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) still face deeply-rooted obstacles to achieve their full potential both as contributors and beneficiaries of social and economic development.

Recent studies have also pointed to another gender gap: women in the region are less likely than men to consider democracy the best political regime, and tend to be less politically active. This work has shown that a number of factors influence attitudes toward democracy, including age, education, access to media, and exposure to corruption. Little research has been directed at determining why this gap exists, however, and its policy implications. For instance, this difference raises the question of whether women's behaviour could erode the much-needed legitimacy of democracy in SSA, a region where democratic gains have been uneven.

KEY FINDINGS

- Support for democracy is gendered. Our research shows that women express lower support for democracy than men in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Gender inequality in the family code, physical integrity, and civil liberties negatively affect women's support for democracy.
- There are factors that increase the probability that women will support democracy, including higher education and age, and equal access to rights in the eyes of the law and in society at large, among others.

- Every policy brief should open with a short summary.
- This could take the form of a few bullet points or a short paragraph or two.
- Regardless of which style you choose, condense the essence of the brief down to a few sentences.





Executive summary

- The executive summary aims to convince the reader further that the brief is worth in-depth investigation.
- It is especially important for an audience that is short of time to clearly see the relevance and importance of the brief in reading the summary. It can include:
 - 1. A description of the problem addressed;
 - 2. A statement on why the current approach/policy needs to be changed;
 - 3. Your recommendations for action.





Tips on executive summary

- The executive summary should always appear on the cover of the brief or at the top of the first page so that it is the first thing a reader will see.
- It can be helpful to write the executive summary last because you will gain clarity on its content as you draft other sections

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Introduction

WHAT'S AT STAKE?

Despite progress in recent years, women in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) still face deeply-rooted obstacles to achieve their full potential both as contributors and beneficiaries of social and economic development.

Recent studies have also pointed to another gender gap: women in the region are less likely than men to consider democracy the best political regime, and tend to be less politically active. This work has shown that a number of factors influence attitudes toward democracy, including age, education, access to media, and exposure to corruption. Little research has been directed at determining why this gap exists, however, and its policy implications. For instance, this difference raises the question of whether women's behaviour could erode the much-needed legitimacy of democracy in SSA, a region where democratic gains have been uneven.

- The introduction should set up the rest of the document and clearly convey your argument.
- The goal is to leave your readers with a clear sense of what your research is about while enticing them to continue reading.





Tips on introduction

- In one or two paragraphs, define why you are writing the brief and express the urgency and importance of the topic to your audience.
- Describe the key questions of your analysis and your conclusions.

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Context & importance of the problem



Photo: © Elizabeth Larson

RESEARCH APPROACH

Between January 2007 and September 2015, researchers ran a randomized trial in collaboration with Save the Children (USA) in six sub-districts of south central Bangladesh. The researchers randomly assigned sample villages to receive: i) a girls' empowerment program; ii) a financial incentive to delay marriage; iii) a combination of the empowerment program and the incentive; and iv) no programming (control group).

The incentive program, which ran from May 2008 to August 2010, used the distribution infrastructure of an existing food security program operated by Save the Children in all communities in the study. In communities offered the conditional incentive, families of unmarried girls aged 15-17 were eligible to receive USD16 worth of cooking oil each year until their daughters reached the age of 18 or married. Cooking oil was chosen as an incentive because it is purchased by all families — and so is equivalent to giving cash — but is easier to track than cash. The value of USD16/year was chosen to offset the higher dowry cost associated with delayed marriage.

In communities receiving the empowerment program, all girls aged 10-19 were invited to take part in one of four six-month cycles of Kishoree Kontha ("Adolescent Girls' Voice"), a peer education program that ran between December 2007 and August 2010. The curriculum included educational and social competency components designed to teach girls about the dangers of early marriage, help them with school work, and equip them to negotiate with their parents when told it was time to marry. The education component aimed to enhance the basic literacy, numeracy, and oral communication of both school-attending and non-attending girls. The social competency component focused on life skills and nutritional and reproductive health knowledge.

Four-and-a-half years after program completion, a follow-up survey of all participants was conducted on the girls' marital status, school attendance, and childbearing history. Attrition was low (15%) given the length of the study. As attrition did not differ between treatment groups, results are assumed to be valid for the entire sample. The analysis sample consists of 19,059 girls from 446 communities.

Child marriage and dowry payments are deeply rooted practices, and difficult to repress by legal means. Among the alternative strategies that have been tested to discourage early marriage, providing financial incentives conditional on school attendance has shown some success. However, these incentives do little to address the problem of child marriage among girls outside the school system. There is also some evidence that empowerment and skills training for young women may delay marriage and childbearing, but there have been few rigorous studies to date on the long-term impact of such programs.

To better inform the design of interventions to reduce child marriage and adolescent childbearing, researchers conducted a long-term study in rural Bangladesh that evaluated the impact of two very different approaches — an adolescent empowerment training program and a conditional incentives program. This brief highlights some of the findings of the evaluation of these programs, with an aim to inform policymakers in Bangladesh and other countries in South Asia on effective, and cost-efficient, ways to reduce child marriage.

- This is one of the most important sections of the brief because it explains the reasoning behind your policy recommendations.
- In effect, this section describes the problem that your policy recommendations intend to solve.
- The length of the problem description may vary considerably from brief to brief depending on the stage of the policy process in focus.





Context & importance of the problem

- The purpose of this element is to convince the target audience that a current and urgent problem exists which requires them to take action. It is the cornerstone of the policy brief.
- As such, it usually includes:
 - 1. A clear statement of the problem or issue in focus;
 - 2. A short overview of the root causes of the problem;
 - 3. A clear statement of the policy implications of the problem that clearly establishes the current importance and policy relevance of the issue.





Research overview

- Provide a summary of the facts to describe the issues, contexts, and research methods.
- Focus on two main elements:
 - 1. Research **APPROACH**: explain how the study was conducted, who conducted it, how the data was collected, and any other relevant background information.
 - 2. Research **RESULTS**: paint a general picture of the research findings before moving on to the specifics.





Tips on problem context

- Avoid jargon and overly technical language.
- Focus on highlighting the benefits and opportunities stemming from solving the focused problem using the presented research.





Examination of findings

- This section should interpret the data in a way that is accessible and clearly connected to your policy advice.
- The goal is to be convincing but ensure that your analysis is balanced and defensible.

RESEARCH APPROACH

The lessons presented here are based on literature review and consultation with 25 experts from the public, private, and academic sectors. The consultation was organized by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), WEConnect International, and Urban Institute in Washington, DC, on May 17, 2016. The analysis covers evidence on women-owned enterprises and how their productivity can be enhanced, with particular focus on SMEs.

While much of the available information, including IFC databases, focuses on formally registered enterprises, this review also addresses unregistered businesses, by tapping data from the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) and training program evaluations, which are not exclusive to the formal sector.

KEY FINDINGS

Rates of female business ownership are on the rise globally, but vary widely by region. According to GEM data for 61 economies, entrepreneurial activity among women increased by seven percent between 2012 and 2014. Africa boasts the highest rates of female entrepreneurship, with women representing half of non-farm business ownership.

While there are important regional differences and data gaps in key areas, several broad findings emerge on the trends, motivations, barriers, and opportunities for women-owned businesses:

Levels of female entrepreneurship vary widely across regions, and appear to correlate with rates of labour force participation. Women-owned businesses tend to be more often motivated by necessity, rather than opportunity, even in advanced, innovation-based economies.

77%

One in three formally registered businesses are owned by women. Data from International Finance Corporation (IFC)

Women globally have only 77 per cent of men's access to bank accounts, credit, and mobile banking. (McKinsey Global Institute)

The constraints on women in business are compounded by discriminatory laws and the burden of care.

Women entrepreneurs in developing countries face many concurrent barriers, at various levels. For example, they have less recognition of their formal rights and unequal access to training and market connections. They tend to be overrepresented in smaller, unregistered, and less productive enterprises and more driven by economic necessity than men. They are often drawn to self-employment in the hope of juggling care responsibilities with their economic needs. And their businesses are more likely to be in sectors that are crowded and have the least growth potential.

Female entrepreneurs have less access to land, capital, and other productive resources. According to McKinsey Global Institute, for example, women globally have only 77 per cent of men's access to bank accounts, credit, and mobile banking. They also tend to network through family connections rather than business associations.

While gender gaps in education are closing in many countries, skills and business training remain targeted mainly towards men. These constraints are further compounded by barriers women face more broadly, particularly the unequal distribution of domestic responsibilities.

Training and services can help close the gender gap, but standalone efforts show limited impact.

Despite targeted efforts, the impact of business training and financial services on the growth of women's businesses tends to be limited. Improving access to credit has seen some success in developing countries. In Latin America, for example, efforts by Proyecto Capital to promote financial services alongside cash transfers were shown to help small businesses expand. However, numerous case studies suggest the impacts of credit access for women-led enterprises are varied, and often small.





Critique of policy option(s)

- The aim of this element is to detail shortcomings of the current approach or options being implemented and, therefore, illustrate both the need for change and focus on where change needs to occur.
- In doing so, the critique of policy options usually includes the following:
 - 1. A short overview of the policy option(s) in focus;
 - 2. An argument illustrating why and how the current or proposed approach is failing.
- It is important for the sake of credibility to recognize all opinions in the debate of the issue.





Tips on examination of findings

- Express ideas using active language and strong assertions.
- Explain the findings and limitations of the research.
- Express research findings in terms of how they relate to concrete realities (instead of theoretical abstractions).





Conclusions and recommendations

GROWTH AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN (GROW)

LESSONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

Valuing care work begins with measuring it.

Many case studies address the need for governments to recognise and remunerate unpaid care as a fundamental step to addressing inequality and empowering women. Yet national accounts do not adequately capture the value of this work. To give policymakers firmer estimates to work with, the Counting Women's Work initiative, spearheaded by University of California, Berkeley, is finetuning a method to capture the unpaid care and housework typically left out of national accounting. It uses time use data to estimate hours spent producing or consuming unpaid care and housework, and assigns that time a replacement wage. Based on data from 29 countries, it shows the value of unpaid care and housework ranges from 12 to 40 percent of GDP.

Investing in public goods and services pays economic and social dividends.

Investments in public childcare services, in essential infrastructure (water, roads, electricity), and in social protection schemes were all noted as helping to close the gender gap in examples cited in consultation. Research by the Women's Budget Group, for example, demonstrated the economic return on investments in the care economy. But a far greater number of cases documented the enormous social benefits resulting from greater access to child care and to labour-saving services and infrastructure. These payoffs include healthier children, improved school attendance, and reductions in gender and domestic violence. When public services are reduced to "save money", the real costs of care remain, and are shouldered disproportionately by families, especially low-income women and girls. In financing public services and infrastructure, governments should avoid regressive tax measures, such as value-added and other consumption taxes, that place a greater tax burden on the poor.

Private sector companies with a shared interest in women's empowerment can be valuable allies.

Case studies of partnership with private sector actors suggest that, where there is a common interest in economically empowering women, such alliances can be successful. WE-Care, for example, has worked with private companies to increase the budgets for care services and infrastructure by employers. They found negotiations successful when there was compelling evidence linking heavy and unequal care responsibilities to the companies' supply chain operations. In Nicaragua, Body Shop International teamed up with Cooperativa Juan Francisco Paz de Silva to better reflect the value of unpaid care in the

pricing of goods produced. Body Shop — which recognised care as an important input to production — now pays an additional premium to cover the unpaid work of women in supply chains. While the private sector can play a vital role in strengthening the care economy, many companies have a limited understanding of the business case. Through its Tackling Childcare project, the World Bank Group/ International Financial Corporation aims to fill the evidence gap to help companies better respond to employees' childcare needs.

This brief highlights insights and recommendations from a consultation organized to inform the UN High Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment. These were captured in: "Transforming Care Dynamics: Lessons from Programme and Policy", a summary of evidence; "Addressing Unpaid Care for Economic Empowerment of Women and Girls", a position paper based on the evidence, both written by Deeptha Chopra and Sahela Nazameen, Research Fellows at the Institute of Development Studies.

Brief produced by: Mary O'Neill, Alejandra Vargas and Deeptha Chopra. Opinions stated in this brief and the paper it draws from, are those of authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the GrOW program partners.



The Growth and Economic Opportunities for Women (GrOW) program is a multi-funder partnership between the United Kingdom's Department for International Development, the Hewlett Foundation, and the International Development Research Centre.

Growth and Economic Opportunities for Women (GrOW)
International Development Research Centre
PO Box 8500, Ottawa, ON
Canada K1G 3H9
Phone: +1 613 2366163
Fax: +1 613 657 7749
Email: grow@idrc.ca
www.idrc.ca/grow

- This final section should detail the actions recommended by research findings.

- Draw the link for your readers between the research findings and your recommendations.
- Use persuasive language to present your recommendations but ensure that all arguments are rooted firmly and clearly in evidence produced by the research.
- You want your readers to be completely convinced that yours is the best advice.





Policy recommendations

- Examine the implications and the recommendations produced by the research.
 - **IMPLICATIONS** are the effects that the research could have in the future. They are a soft but persuasive approach to describe the potential consequences of particular policies.
 - Follow up the implications with your **RECOMMENDATIONS**. Beyond being descriptive, your recommendations should act as a call to action by stating precise, relevant, credible, and feasible next steps.
- Sometimes also includes a closing paragraph re-emphasizing the importance of action.





Tips on conclusions

- Think of the conclusion as a mirror to your introduction: you are once again providing an overview of your argument, but this time you are underlining its strength rather than introducing it.





Appendices



Impactos de la Forestación en el Agua y los Suelos de los Andes

Centro para la Investigación Forestal Internacional

CIFOR impulsa el bienestar humano, la conservación ambiental y la equidad mediante investigación orientada hacia políticas y prácticas que afectan a los bosques de los países en vías de desarrollo. CIFOR es uno de 15 centros que forman el Grupo Consultivo sobre Investigación Agrícola Internacional (CGIAR por sus siglas en inglés). La sede principal de CIFOR se encuentra en Bogor, Indonesia. El centro también cuenta con oficinas en Asia, África y Sudamérica.

¿Cómo citar este documento?

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cifor.org
forestsnews.cifor.org

- Although the brief is a short and targeted document, authors sometimes decide that their argument needs further support and so include an appendix
- Appendices should be included **ONLY WHEN ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY.**





DESIGN

- The design and presentation of your brief are important considerations and can help keep the reader engaged.
- It includes:

TITLES AND HEADINGS

SIDEBARS

LISTS

GRAPHICS





How to use titles and headings?

- Titles act as a REFERENCE POINT to entice readers.
- Include sub-titles or headings to break up the text and draw the reader's ATTENTION to the main topic of each section.
- Use VERBS to make headings more dynamic.
- Phrase headings as QUESTIONS to spark a reader's curiosity.
- Headings should contain RELEVANT information without being too long.

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Sidebars

- Sidebars add greater depth to the main discussion and hook a reader's attention.
- They visually break up the brief and make documents easier to read.
- They should be:
 - Short;
 - Descriptive;
 - Engaging;
 - Action-oriented.

KEY RESULTS

- Incentives for unmarried girls delayed marriage and childbirth, and prolonged school attendance.
- Empowerment programming extended girls' education, but did not significantly delay marriage.
- Incentives for unmarried girls benefited girls out of school as well as those attending.
- There was no observed advantage of combining incentives with empowerment programming.





Lists

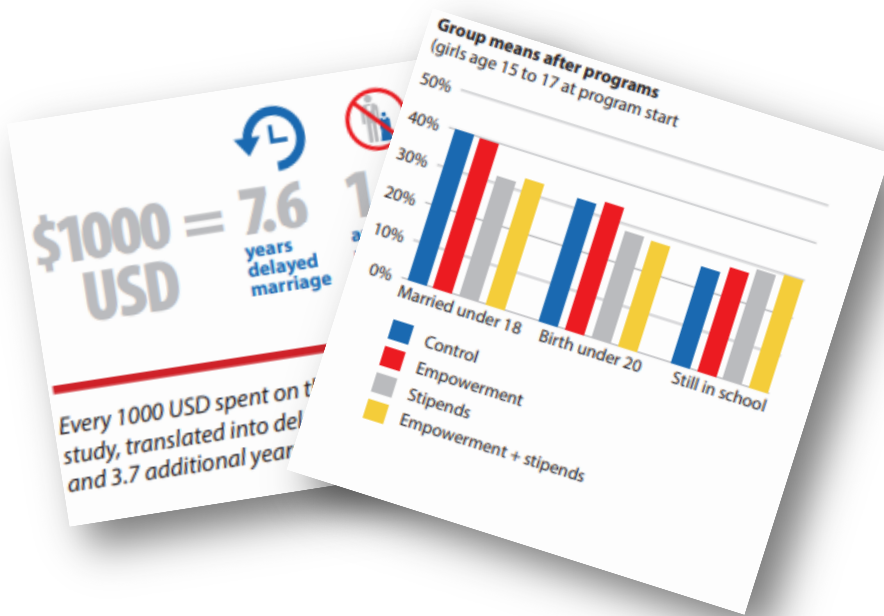
- Lists are an effective and visually interesting way to simplify dense content.
- Criteria:
 - They should be no longer than five to seven bullet points.
 - Each bullet point should express complete thoughts.
 - Avoid using bullet points that are only one or two words in length.





Graphics

- Visuals are easily one of the best ways to make policy briefs more interesting for readers.
- Every visual should serve a purpose and help to illustrate your argument.
- Criteria:
 - Choose effective visuals for the information you would like to communicate.
 - Include captions for photos and other visuals to explain the content to the reader.





Designing graphics

By designing static graphics that are primarily intended to inform readers, early ideas can be validated by asking questions like:

- Is it required to present several and diverse data variables?
- Is the reader required to make comparisons?
- Is the reader required to quantify?
- Is the reader required to identify correlations or relationships between the data?

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Classification of visualizations

CATEGORICAL

Comparing categories and distributions of quantitative values

C

HIERARCHICAL

Charting part-to-whole relationships and hierarchies

H

RELATIONAL

Graphing relationships to explore correlations and connections

R

TEMPORAL

Showing trends and activities over time

T

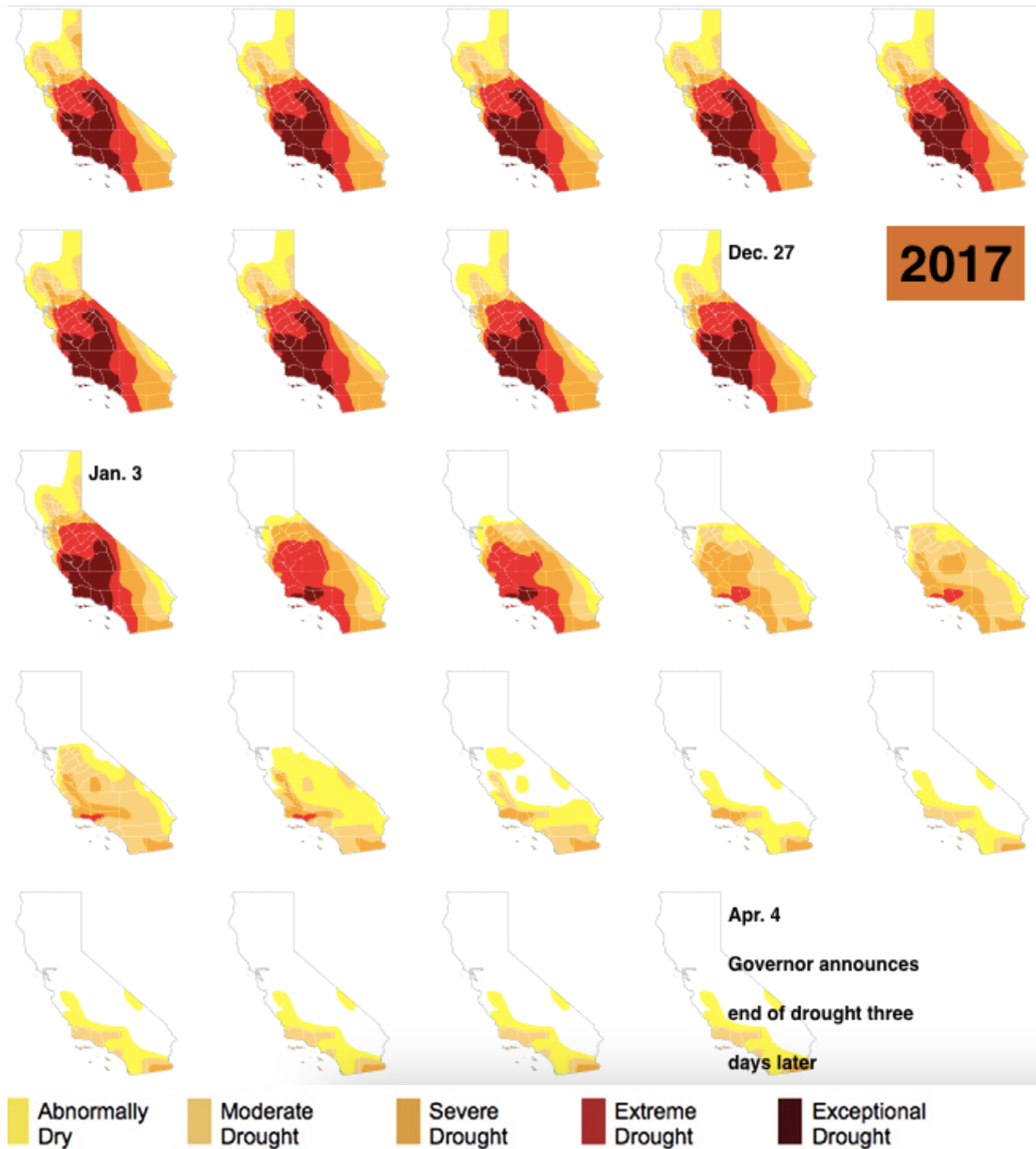
SPATIAL

Mapping spatial patterns through overlays and distortions

S



Temporal visualization

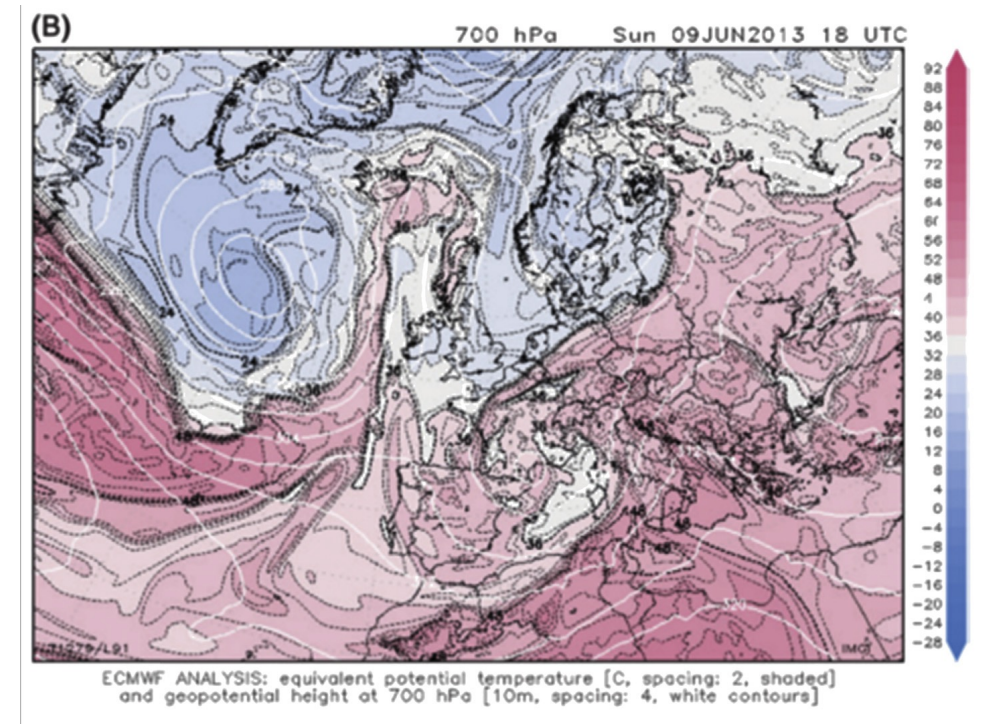
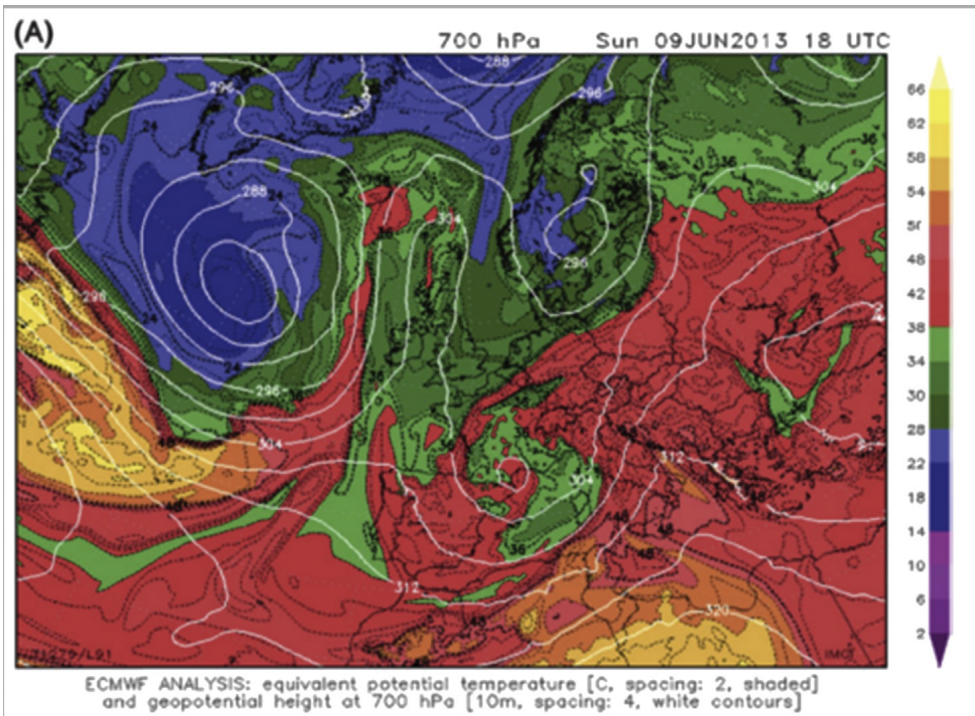


- Narrative-based infographic from the Los Angeles Times, using small multiples to show weekly changes in Californian drought in 2016. This periodically updated web article contains 231 maps dating back to the beginning of the drought.
- Plotting some data together can result in unclear, or worse still, misleading representations. Combining graphs in this way takes advantage of the brain's ability to immediately compare and see changes, patterns or differences in information. Readers can easily see differences, rather than having to retain a picture in their mind and rely on their working memory.
- <https://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-g-california-drought-map-htmlstory.html>

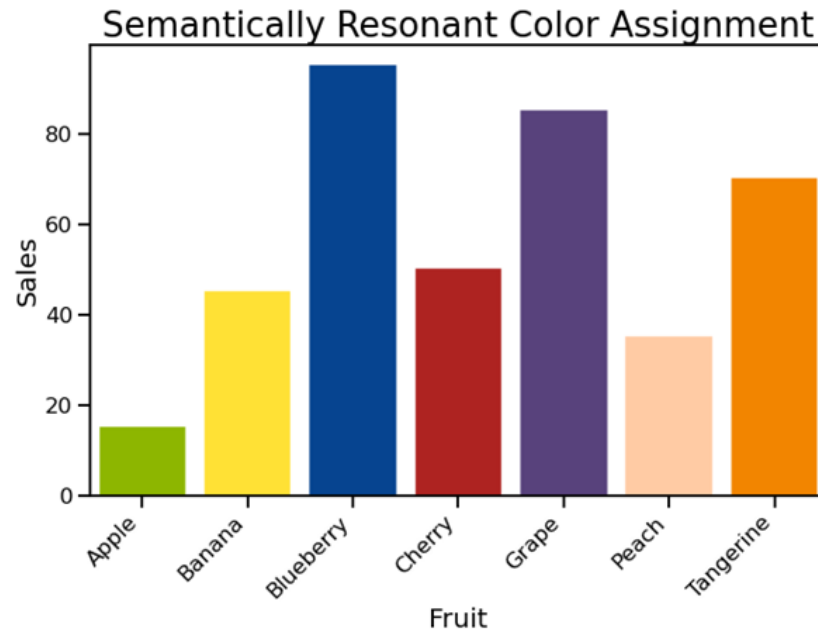
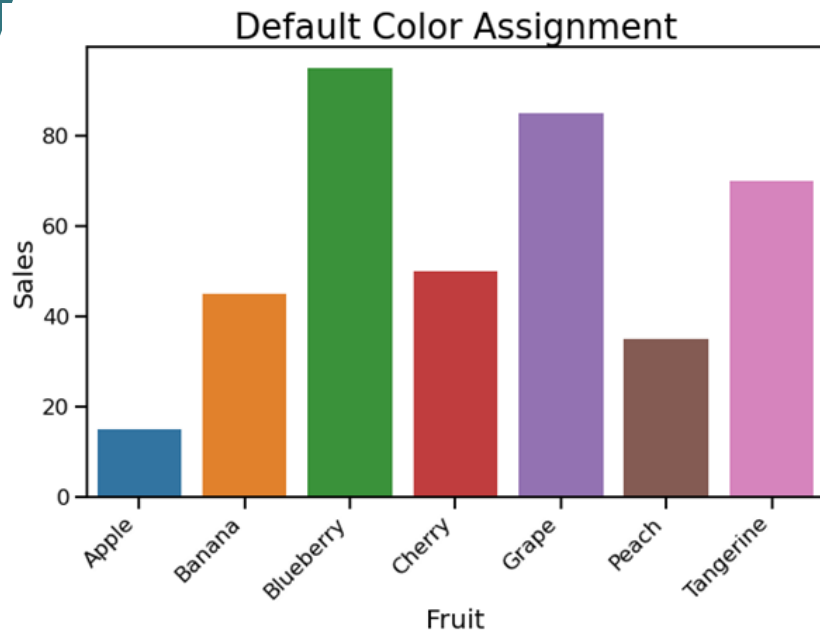


Shape and color

- Rainbow color schemes are very popular within environmental science, despite being highly problematic and misleading.
- An identical equivalent potential temperature ($^{\circ}\text{C}$) analysis at 700 hPa from the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF). The primary task for the reader would be to identify frontal zones.
- A redesigned map using a diverging colour scheme and a sensible colour scheme, resulting in more efficient pattern recognition and user understanding.
- <http://dx.doi.org/10.1175/BAMS-D-13-00155.1>

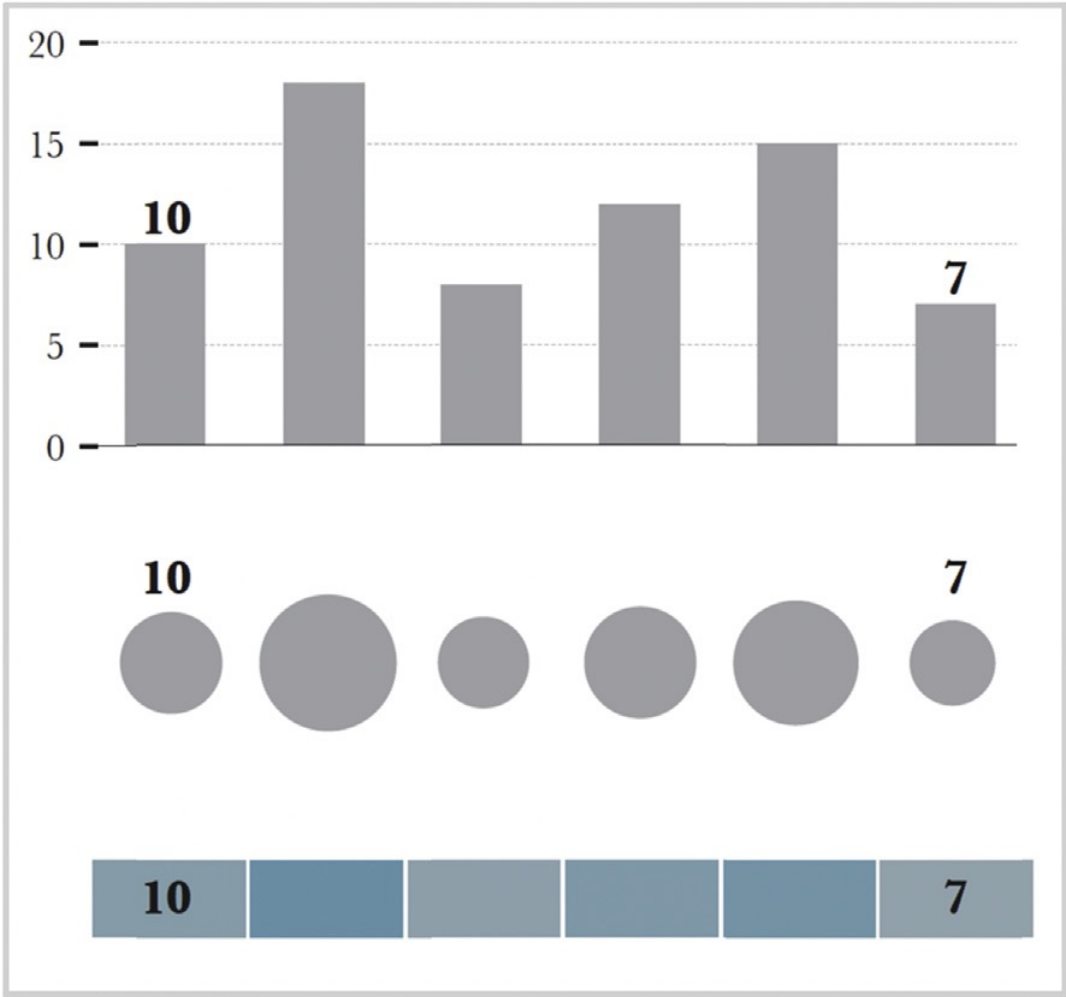


Categories



- Categories are best represented using color shades of equal intensity.
- Follow cultural or natural connotations of specific colors based on the targeted audience.
- For example, for Western audiences, the color red may be associated with danger, while for Chinese audiences, the color may imply good fortune.
- Representing high temperatures in red and low temperatures in blue is a typical example of the use of natural connotations.
- When representing data that is related to visible objects, selecting the corresponding color will likely result in faster recognition by the user.



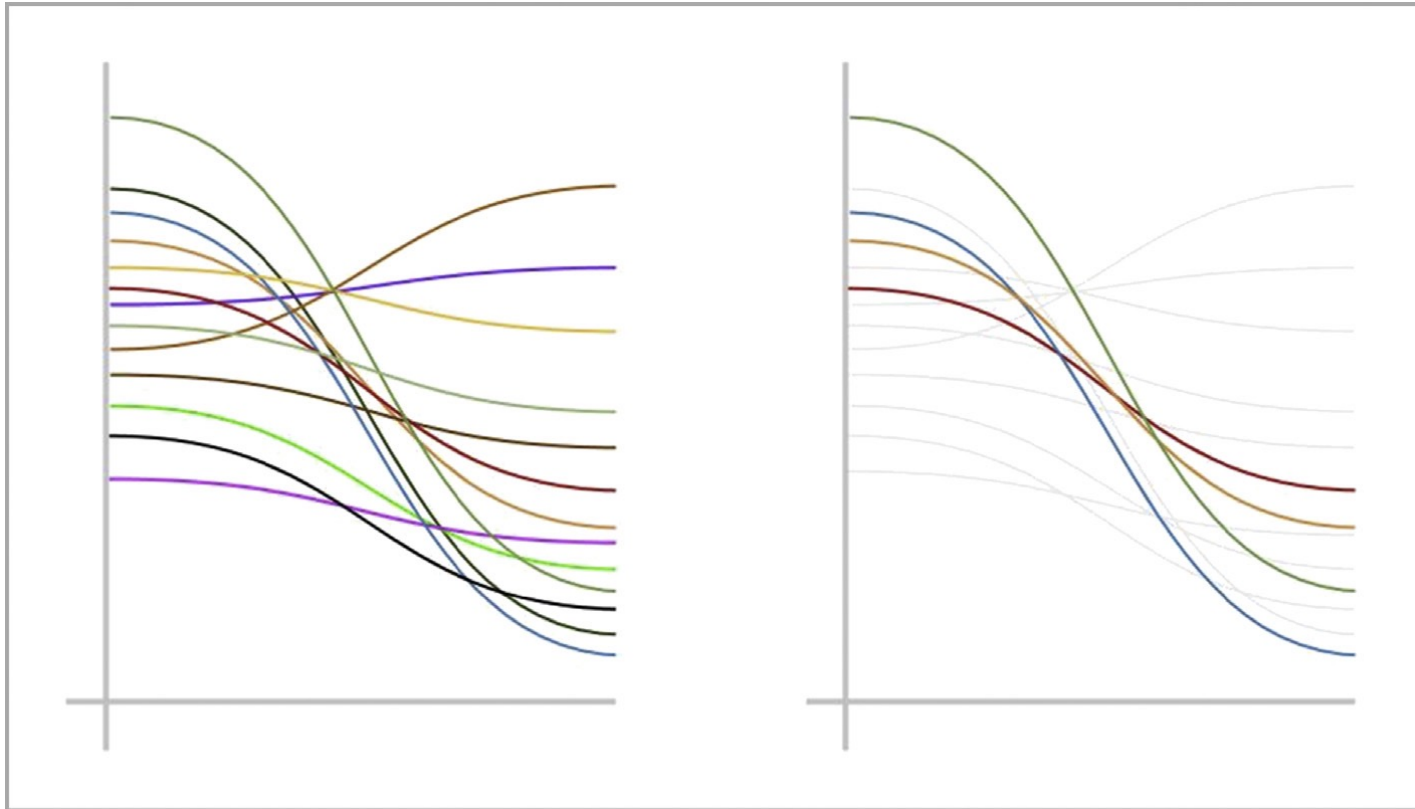


Monochromatic and simple

- There is a perceptual benefit to using monochrome tones for particular graphs when exact comparisons of numerical data are the reader's primary goal.
- To reduce the risk of using colors inappropriately, attributes such as position or shape can be used before changing the color hue or intensity.
- Intensity is a general term that applies to two attributes: brightness and saturation.
- Same data coded in three different graphic forms: bars (top), areas (middle), and color saturation (bottom).



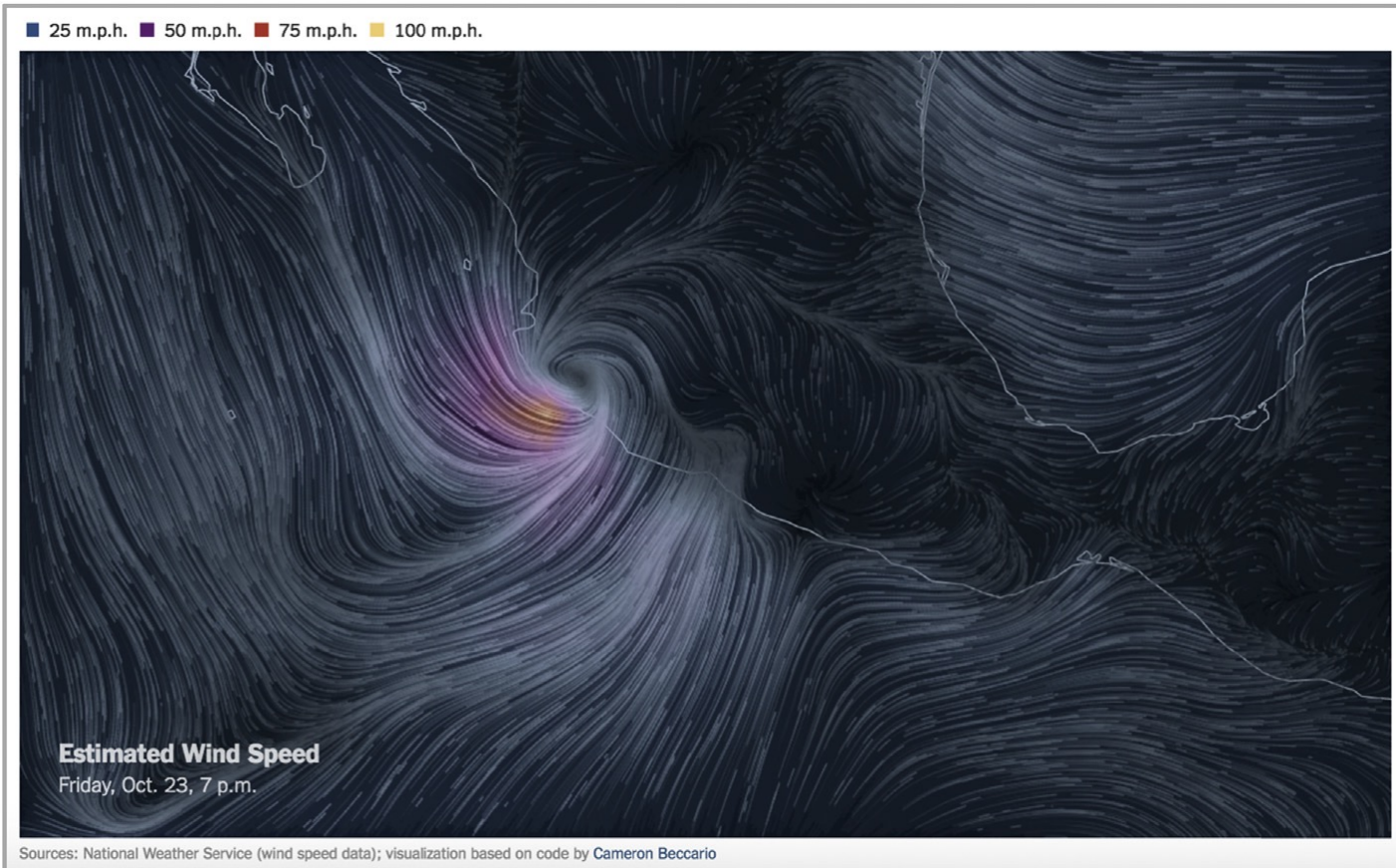
Visual clarity



- Design solutions are most effective when you communicate a lot using little: focusing on beauty in terms of clarity and functionality.
- Visual clarity can be achieved by highlighting particular relevant aspects of the data, while keeping secondary information in the background.
- While it is important to exclude data that is irrelevant to the user's professional culture or decision scenarios, presenting particular relationships and comparisons in context with other less relevant data could help deepen the reader's overall understanding. .



Visual narrative

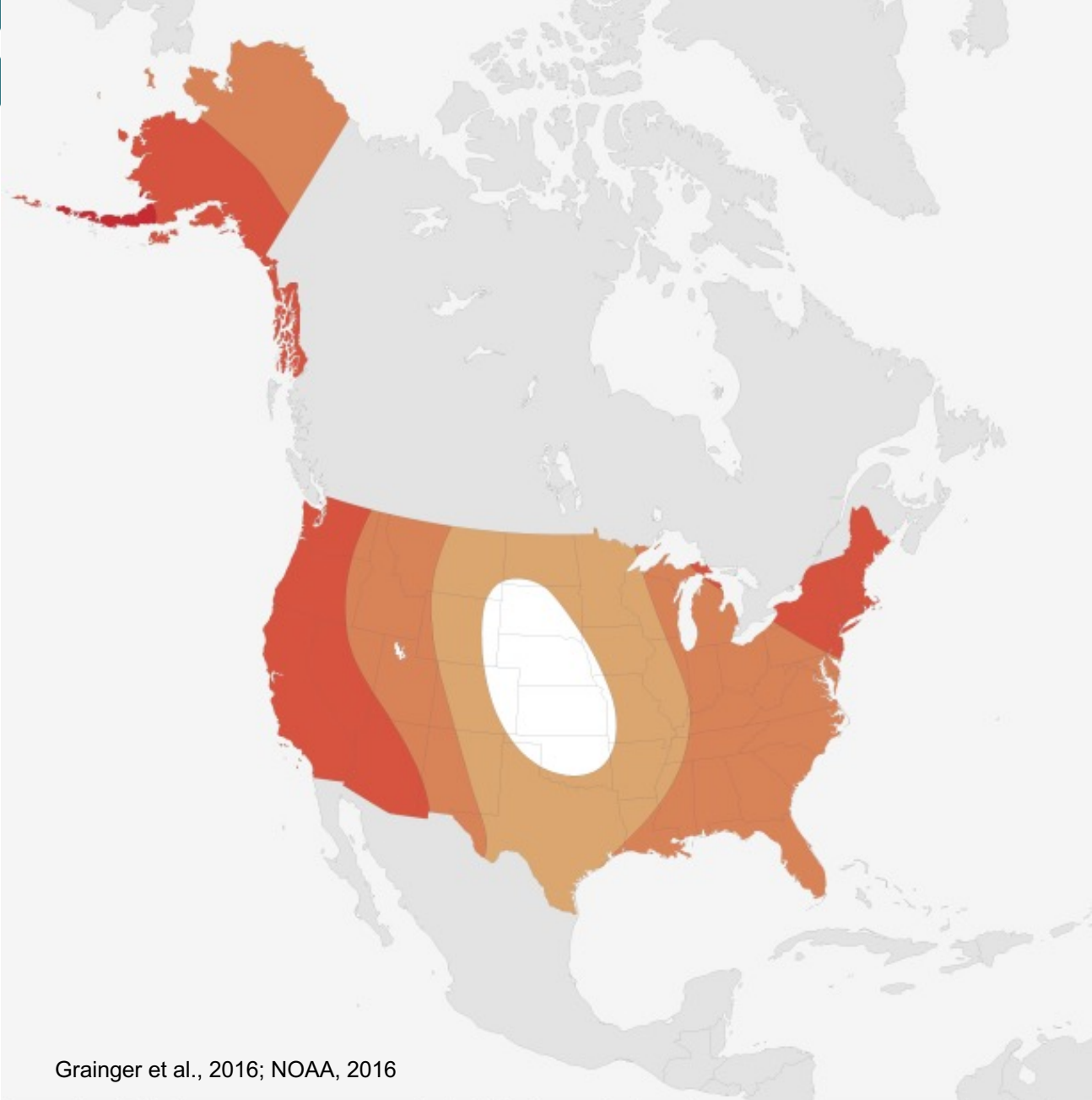


- Research suggests that non-specialist audiences find “stories” more entertaining and easier to understand than the relationship-based approaches traditionally used in scientific communication.
- This screenshot of a map of the Pacific coast of Mexico is from a New York Times interactive graphic article titled “Visualizing the size and strength of Hurricane Patricia.”
- <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/10/23/world/americas/hurricane-patricia.html>

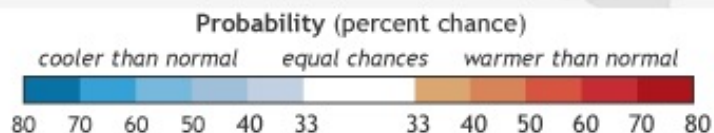


Communicating uncertainty

- The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) 2016 temperature outlook representing the probability (percent chance) of an abnormally warm or cool summer.
- Professional users have been found to prefer receiving probabilistic information from familiar formats such as 'likelihood' maps or representations of forecast 'spread' (e.g., hurricanes, fan charts and error bars), as opposed to displaying discrete categories.
- <https://www.climate.gov/news-features/featured-images/noaa-2016-summer-outlook-where-are-highest-chances-hot-summer-us>



Grainger et al., 2016; NOAA, 2016





REVISION

- Reflect once again on its purpose, audience, content, and structure.
- Will your brief help to achieve your goals?
- Test it:
 - Try to explain it in a 20-second elevator pitch to assess what information stands out.
 - Make it as user-friendly as possible by removing jargon and statistics that make it less approachable.
 - Ask a colleague with no prior knowledge of the issue to read the brief and provide feedback.





USE AND EVALUATION

- A good policy brief can play double duty by standing on its own or as an effective accompaniment to a presentation.
- Test:
 - Tailor any accompanying visual presentation to your brief by focusing only on the key points and answering important questions.
 - Avoid repeating all of the brief's text in your presentation.
 - When distributing your policy brief, develop a short question-and-answer package and a section for further reading.



Read more

- IDRC, 2021. How to write a policy brief: <https://www.idrc.ca/en/how-write-policy-brief>.
- CBMS, 2011. Guidelines for Writing a Policy Brief http://www.pep-net.org/sites/pep-net.org/files/typo3doc/pdf/CBMS_country_proj_profiles/Philippines/CBMS_forms/Guidelines_for_Writing_a_Policy_Brief.pdf.
- Grainger et al., 2016. Environmental data visualisation for non-scientific contexts: Literature review and design framework. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.envsoft.2016.09.004>.
- Kirk, 2017. Data visualization & infographic design: Training workshop. www.visualisingdata.com.
- Tsai, 2006. Guidelines for Writing a Policy Brief. <http://jhunix.hcf.jhu.edu/~ktsai/policybrief.html>.
- Kopenski, 2010. Policy Briefs. <http://www.richmond.ac.uk/content/library/subjects/politics/policy-briefs.aspx>.
- Young & Quinn (n.d.). The Policy Brief. <http://www.policy.hu/ipf/fel-pubs/samples/PolicyBrief-described.pdf>.
- Proyecto Infraestructura Natural para la Seguridad Hídrica, 2018-2022. www.infraestructuranatural.pe.



Thank you

Questions?

Boris F. Ochoa-Tocachi, PhD
boris@atuk.com.ec
[@topicster](https://twitter.com/topicster)