

MATHEMATICAL MODELING FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASE PLANNING IN AFRICA

Training Graduation Ceremony



The fun moments

Zumba sessions



Scavenger hunt



The body spellers game



End of Session 1 Celebrations



Quiz



Caroline's birthday



Learning objectives

At the end of this lecture, you would:

1. Understand the core components of policy briefs
2. Be able to draft these sections for a policy brief

What is your purpose?

- Who is your audience?
- What change are you trying to make?
- What evidence do you have to support that change?

Who is your audience?

Policy briefs are drafted for specific audiences – the changes they can make and the information they need.

- Why do/should they care?
- How much do they already know about the issue?
- Do they have existing interest in the issue?
- What questions do they need answered?
- What information will they want to motivate change?
- What is the most effective way to communicate this information?
- What barriers might they present to change? What will be their concerns?

What are your key recommendations?

The primary goal of policy briefs is to convey your information to your target audience. Having clear, evidence informed recommendations are key.

- What are your recommendations?
- What evidence can you point to from your results to support these recommendations?

Digging into the content of a policy brief

- Title
- Summary
- Introduction/Current context
- Results
 - +/- some methods
- Recommendations with evidence
 - +/- uncertainty – outstanding questions
- Appendices (if necessary)
- References

Could include

- Figures
- Tables
- Pictures
- Sidebars

Title

- Brief, but catchy
- Want to capture the interest of the policy maker.
- Aim for 12 words or less.

Summary

- Usually at the beginning of the brief.
- Summarize:
 - Key problem trying to address
 - Primary finding (“we found that...”)
 - Primary recommendations
- Ideally <200 words

Introduction

- High-level summary of context
- Needs to frame your recommendations in the context of a problem, *but*
- Cannot be a deep dive of all issues
- Ideally <200 words

Results

- Key findings from your work, presented objectively.
- You may need to give some methods; without too much detail. If so, draft this in a separate section (and perhaps provide an appendix). Methods should be less than 100 words.
- Results should ideally be less than 200 words

Recommendations

- A brief summary of your key recommendations with supporting evidence. Evidence can be provided in figures/tables that are referenced.
- You want to be very concrete and confident, but to also address uncertainties.

References

- We don't want to go overboard on references, but we do want to use them if appropriate.
- Identify 1-4 of the most critical references. Use numbers in text and list references with a brief citation style at end.
 - Musanabaganwa C, Cubaka V, Mpabuka E, Semakula M, Nahayo E, Hedt-Gauthier BL, Ng KCS, Murray MB, Kateera F, Mutesa L, Nsanzimana S. One hundred thirty-three observed COVID-19 deaths in 10 months: unpacking lower than predicted mortality in Rwanda. *BMJ Glob Health*. 2021 Feb;6(2):e004547.
 - Musanabaganwa et al. One hundred thirty-three observed COVID-19 deaths in 10 months: unpacking lower than predicted mortality in Rwanda. *BMJ Glob Health* 2021.

Any additional materials

- Figures
 - Tables
 - Pictures
 - Sidebars
- These pieces often can make a policy brief more interesting and capture the interest of the policy maker.
 - However, over use can make the brief cluttered and overwhelming.
 - Aim to have no more than 4 of these items included.

Remember our checklists

Argument flows clearly

- Clear aims
- Clear conclusions from the outset
- Evidence-supported problem statement
- Clear and specific recommended actions
- Recommendations flow logically from the evidence presented
- All information is necessary for the development of the argument

Content is appropriate for the audience

- Importance to the audience is clear
- Recommendations are appropriate for the audience
- Understandable without specialised knowledge

Remember our checklists

Language is clear, concise and engaging

- Words are not unnecessarily complex
- No jargon
- Clear, concise sentences
- Text is engaging (e.g. active voice)

Data are presented effectively

- All data are necessary for the argument
- Data are easy to understand
- Data are presented in the most appropriate format
- Graphics are not redundant with text

Start drafting the content of your policy brief

- Title
- Summary
- Introduction/Current context
- Results
 - +/- some methods
- Recommendations with evidence
 - +/- uncertainty – outstanding questions
- Appendices (if necessary)
- References

Could include

- Figures
- Tables
- Pictures
- Sidebars