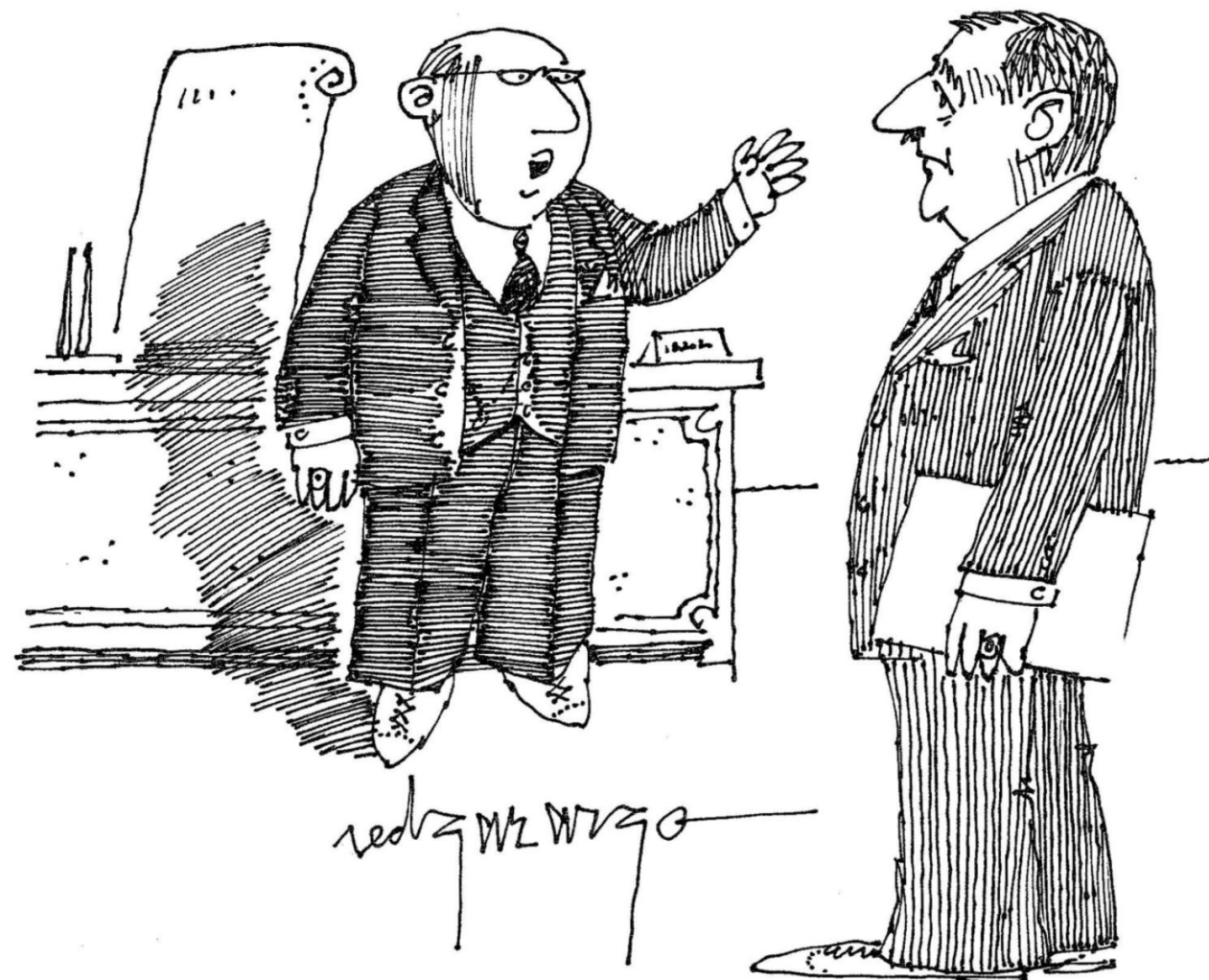
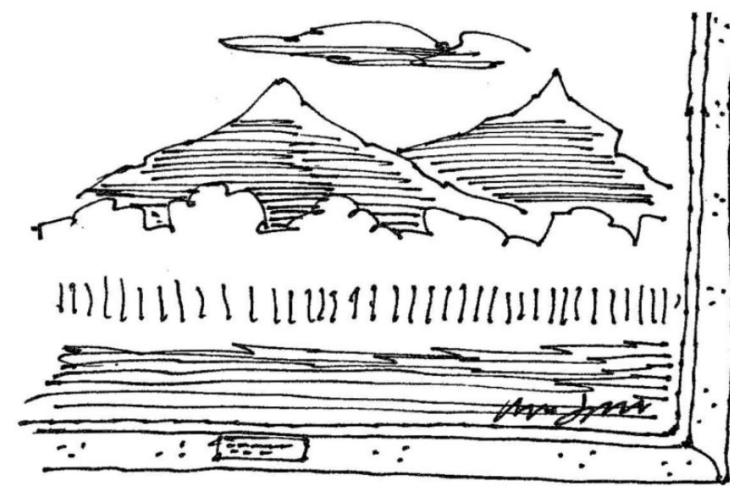


Using market research for evidence-based policymaking

Gayani Hurulle

3 May 2023

**Evidence-based
decision-making
especially important in
public policy given the
number of lives in
touches**



"WHILE DOING THE RESEARCH, KEEP IN MIND THERE ARE ONLY TWO KINDS OF FACTS... THOSE THAT SUPPORT MY POSITION... AND INCONCLUSIVE."

Good evidence is sometimes absent, sometimes ignored



Photo: Lakruwan Wanniarachchi

COVID-19 risk mitigation measures

More acceptable, given dearth of evidence on good practices



Photo: Reuters

Fertilizer ban

Less acceptable, given abundance of evidence on good practices

Our role & policy wins

LIRNEasia: a digital policy think tank working across the Asia Pacific



Our Mission:

“Catalyzing policy change through research to improve people’s lives in the emerging Asia Pacific by facilitating their use of hard and soft infrastructures through the use of knowledge, information and technology”

What we do: conduct rigorous research related to infrastructure & development

Some areas we work in



Digital access & use

Assessing the state of internet access and use (including coverage, affordability & skills), and finding policy, regulatory & technical solutions to connect the unconnected



Digital & data for development

Understanding the role of digitalization & datafication in enabling access to reach other developmental goals (on access to food, education, work etc.)



Digital rights

Helping create an equitable, human rights-enabling, safe Internet for users in the region by understanding user behaviour

Some methods we use

- Nationally representative surveys
- Qualitative research (FGDs, KIIs, ethnographies)
- Big data analysis

What we do: take research to policy

Conduct research



Communicate findings



Policy impact

16 / 46 | 100% | lirneasia | 1/7

- The USF infrastructure program will bring improved communications especially to the mountainous regions where ethnic and religious minorities live.
- The digital skills program will include a focus on women to ensure their digital capabilities improve.
- The special program includes a program to provide tools for persons with disabilities to better use communications services.

The USF will monitor key communications use categories according to gender, religion, ethnicity and disability. If the gap is not closing, special additional measures shall be taken.

The universal service dimension of accessibility is to minimize differences among the population in regards to their access to basic communications services. This means both men and women should have equal access, and no discrimination due to religious belief or ethnicity. The Universal Service Strategy also identifies measures that will help people with disability to use communication services.

ICT data comparing men and women

The [LirneAsia/MIDO](#) ICT study from 2016 showed that while 72% of men owned a mobile phone, this was only 52% among women. The field visit in Chin and Kachin state also provided anecdotal evidence that when a household only has one mobile phone, it stays with the male, and is not accessible for the woman when the man takes it to work or travels.

On the other hand, among smartphone owners, men and women are very close, with 78% men and 77% women. Also in terms of mobile data usage, men and women are fairly close with 51% among men and 47% of female phone owners using mobile data.

The main difference between men and women appears to be in regards to digital skills. Data shows that women's skills are consistently lower than those of men. This will be addressed in Program 2.

2.2.4 Awareness/ ability

The analysis has identified that there is a major gap between the ownership of data-capable mobile phones and the awareness and ability to take full advantage of Internet information and services. For example, currently only 22% of mobile Internet users state that they have the required skills to use the Internet. In addition, the penetration of

Impact in Sri Lanka varies by sector and type



In 2017, LIRNEasia helped establish DataSEARCH, a multidisciplinary research center affiliated to the Department of Computer Science & Engineering, University of Moratuwa



In 2016, LIRNEasia's big data research informed the Western Region Megapolis Master Plan



In 2016, the Minister of Finance announced a 10% reduction in data tax based on LIRNEasia recommendations on telecom tax structures



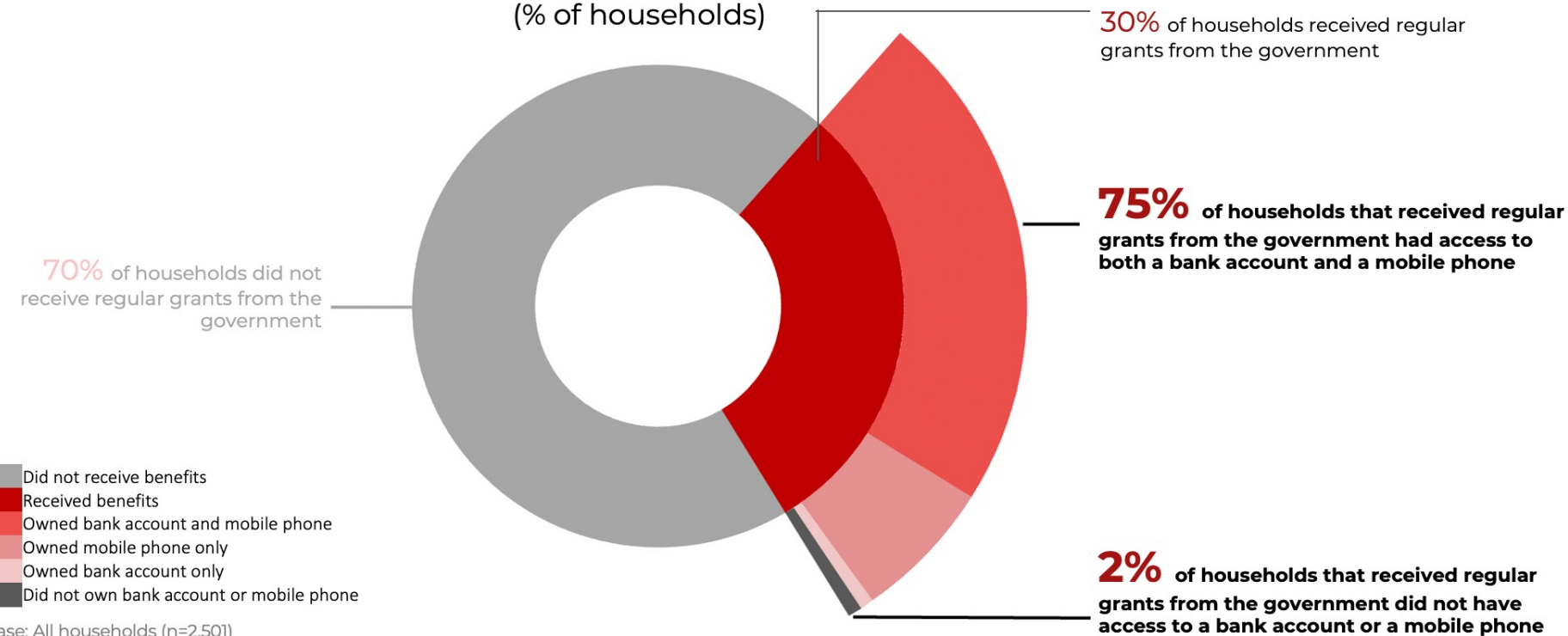
In 2014, the CEB announced SMS notifications for customers after red notice, before disconnection of electricity, based on LIRNEasia recommendations

Key focus at present: reforming social safety nets

Transfer payments to banks & mobile money accounts



Households that received social grants or benefits from the state (% of households)



Base: All households (n=2,501)

Q: How many people in this household receive regular social grants or benefit (welfare) from the state (eg. disability, unemployment, veteran, child support, scholarship, Samurdhi)?

Source: LIRNEasia COVID impact survey, 2021. Representative of all households and age 15 and above population in Sri Lanka with a +/- 2.8% margin of error at 95% confidence interval.

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LIRNEasia research
August 2022

Benefits Act No. 24 of 2002, all welfare benefits payment schemes will be prepared based on that social registry system.

46.3. The WBB will coordinate payments of all welfare benefits. Electronic payments of benefits under this social registry and all welfare benefit payment schemes framed thereunder are facilitated to the bank accounts of eligible beneficiaries. Payment under the new welfare benefit payment schemes are expected to start by April 2023. Until then, the existing welfare benefits schemes will be maintained.

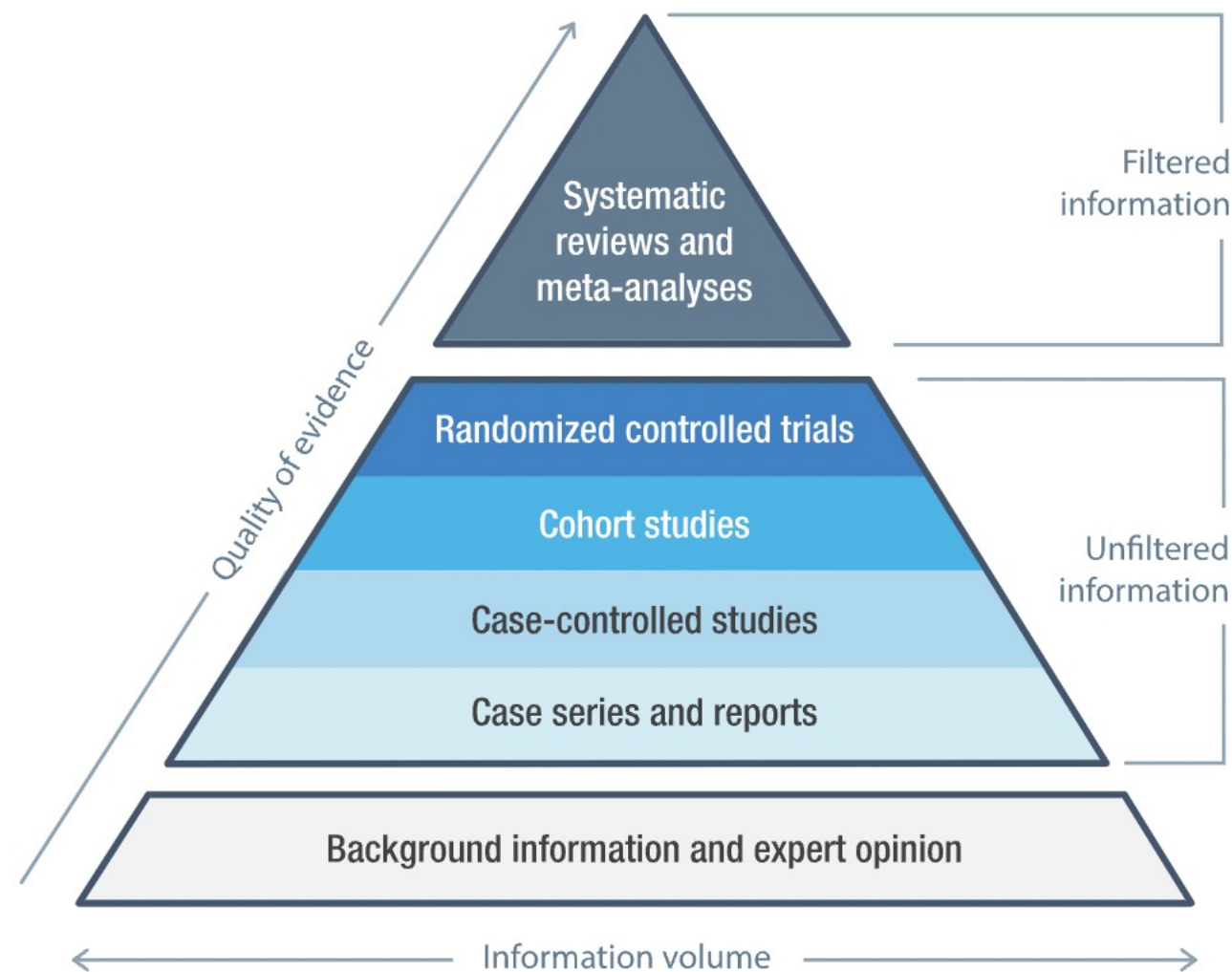
2023 Budget Speech
November 2022

3 key takeaways

Taking research to policy

Takeaway 1: Produce high quality evidence

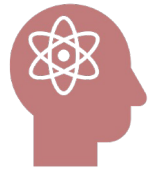
Hierarchy of evidence



← Critical analysis of existing studies, including those informed by market research

← Can be within scope for market research

Takeaway 2: Show a clear, succinct message



Ethos

For credibility & trust

Show expertise and build trust amongst policymakers



Pathos

For emotions, values

Stories, photos, videos of policy issue, success stories



Logos

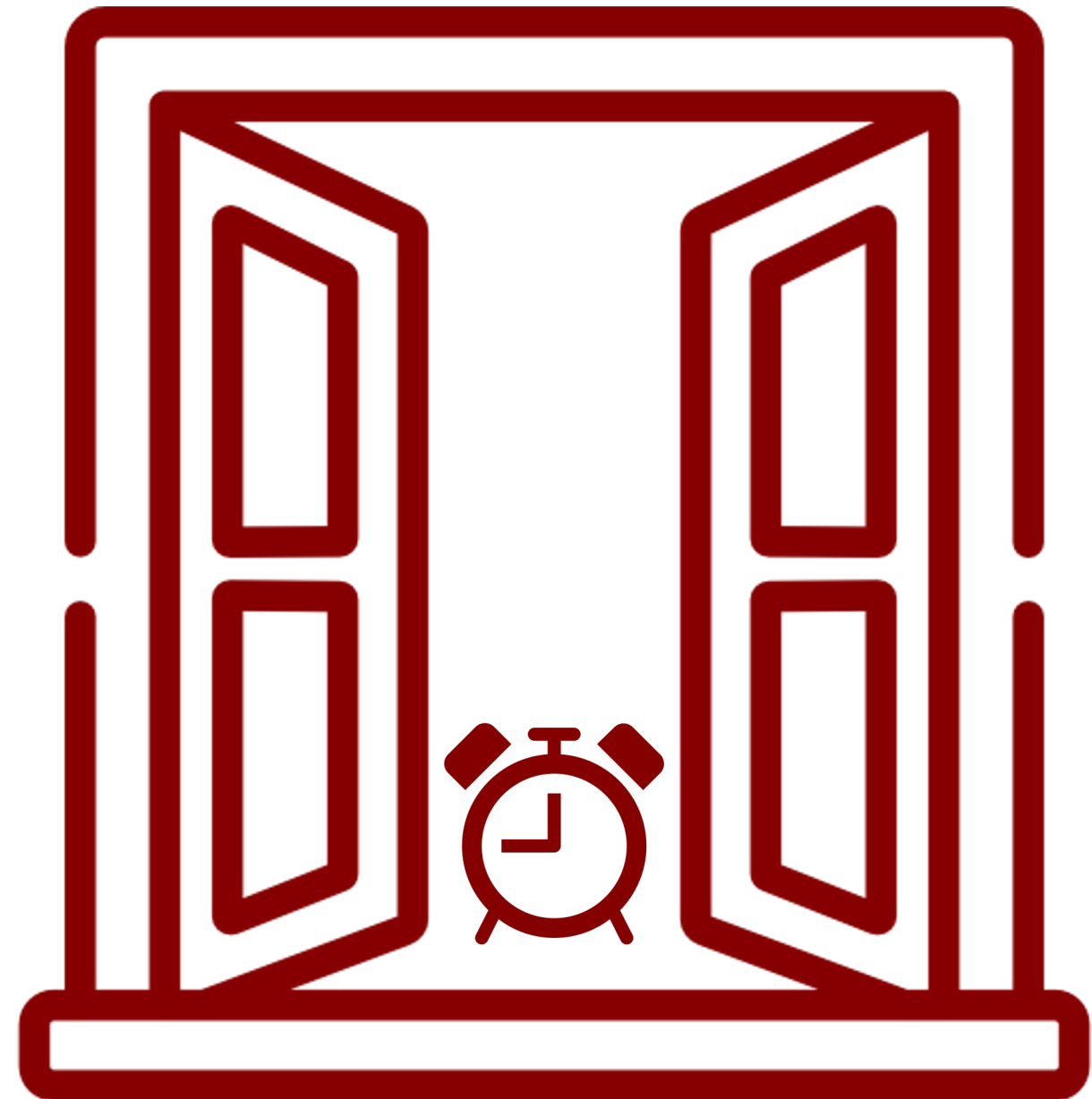
For logic, reason & proof

Numbers highlighting policy issue, solutions

Takeaway 3: Capitalize on policy windows

Policy windows: where an alignment can be perceived between political conditions, a specific problem at hand, and the existence of a policy idea that could provide an effective solution to that problem.

Kingdon (1984), Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies.



Thank you!

For more information

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