

Editorial Policy & Style Guide

Objective

The journal's purpose is to encourage the dissemination of public policy innovations for private sector-led and market-based solutions for development. The style and format (clear, practical, and short) makes complex issues easily accessible but compelling for busy decision-makers from a range of professional disciplines. The advice offered to them must be tightly focused and practical so they can use it.

Content, language and style

Text offered for publication should:

- be analytical (not descriptive),
- be specific and concrete (not abstract or academic) in its policy recommendations for developing countries,
- offer hard evidence that these recommendations will work and outline risks,
- give implementation instructions,
- still be light in tone and easy to read.

The policy problem/question being addressed should be clear and specific at the start of the text. The main message should be clear in the opening summary and clearly linked to the policy problem. The bulk of the text should back up the message. With a limit of 2400 words, only 1-2 main messages are realistic to avoid becoming superficial.

See checklist below for special case study and econometric analysis requirements.

Length restrictions

- Maximum length for the summary text is 90 words.
- Maximum length for the main body text is 2400 words - less if graphs and tables are included.
- Maximum length for the main title is 23 characters.
- Maximum length for the sub title is 50 characters.
- Data for figures should be provided in an excel sheet.

Text longer than 2400 words will not be accepted.

Review

To be accepted for publication the draft must meet a high standard of analysis and pass one or more of the following tests:

- It provides new insights.
- It serves as a valuable reference.
- It illustrates useful lessons.
- It provides a simple exposition of a complex issue.

Drafts should have two independent reviewers agreed with the editor, and at least one of the reviewers should have considerable World Bank Group operational experience.

Editing

The series production team does the copy edit and layout including recreating any graphics. Final copy is submitted to the author for approval prior to publication.

Dissemination

The final text will be:

- printed in hard copy for distribution to World Bank Group staff and clients,
- published as an Adobe PDF online,
- promoted in e-newsletters to over 15,000 subscribers.

Guidelines for case studies

Case studies illustrating the handling of a specific policy issue should provide answers to the following questions:

- What is the policy problem, what is the evidence of it?
- Is it a problem that arises in most countries, or is it specific to one or a few?
- What precise form did it take in the case being described?
- How was it addressed?
- What other options were considered or might have been considered and why were they rejected?
- What is the evidence of impact / outcomes of the new approach? How well is the approach tailored to the problem / situation. Provide compelling evidence.

- What issues do - or potentially - remain?
- Is the solution replicable in other countries?

Case studies illustrating the response to a specific implementation problem should answer these questions:

- What is the nature of the problem, at what point did it arise, is it a problem that could arise in all countries?
- How did the problem arise, and what precise form did it take in the case being described?
- How was it addressed?
- What other options for addressing it were considered or might have been considered?
- How well is the approach tailored to the problem / situation – provide hard evidence?
- What issues do - or potentially - remain?
- How might these problems have been mitigated earlier on in the project / reform?
- What should happen next to solve the outstanding problems?

Guidelines for econometric analysis of datasets

The submissions should cover the following:

- What is the policy problem?
- What is the policy debate?
- What is unique about the data and the data analysis?
- What new light does the data analysis shed on the problem? What does the analysis say and what are the conclusions?
- What are the key and practical policy implications and why should they work?
- Add implementation guidance and risks to manage if relevant