



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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149th IPU Assembly

Geneva
13–17 October 2024



Workshop

Data and evidence for decision-making and accountability in parliament

Wednesday, 16 October 2024, 14:30 – 16:00
Room 4, level-1, CICC

Concept note

Evidence-based decision-making and policy development are at the heart of building effective, transparent and accountable governance institutions whose work is impactful, trusted, understood and respected.

In a world of disinformation, fake news and increased mistrust in politics, a key question arises: How do parliamentarians get the data and evidence they need to make informed decisions and hold the government accountable? Furthermore, the complexity of today's challenges, the rapid pace of developments, their interconnectedness at global, regional, national and local levels, and the multiplication of stakeholders demand even greater access to comprehensive, reliable data and evidence for sound and impactful decision-making.

Evidence and data make and shape policies. Using them well in parliament helps MPs to hold their government accountable on its performance, prevent bad policy from being developed or implemented, and draw attention to problems the government may have overlooked. Evidence and data help policy makers to identify problems, set goals, design interventions and evaluate whether policies have had the intended effect.

With a multitude of sources of information (or disinformation), parliaments are faced with the challenge of setting up an effective "evidence and data ecosystem" that would support systematic use of evidence and data in decision-making.

A well-functioning "evidence and data ecosystem" that is institutionalized with structures, capacities and incentives in place, will ensure that evidence is available and accessible to all parliamentarians, and routinely used to inform decision-making.

Many parliaments have research services that provide non-partisan research and analysis, as well as partnerships with academia, civil society organizations, the scientific community, think tanks, etc. Parliaments also often have access to other institutional sources of evidence and data from national institutions, such as national statistics offices and national audit offices.

There is a moral, socioeconomic and political imperative to increase the use of research in policy and decision-making. By leveraging the best available evidence, parliaments can improve the effectiveness, efficiency and equity of policies, enhance the use of public resources, and increase the transparency and accountability of work carried out. Of course, access to evidence and data is one thing; the correct and systematic use of evidence and data in policy and decision-making is another.

The workshop will explore how evidence and data are currently used in parliaments and explore strategies to enhance their systematic use in policy and decision-making.

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The workshop will be presented with the results of an IPU survey, led by the IPU Working Group on Science and Technology, entitled *Mapping the engagement between Parliament and Science*. It will then examine ways to enhance parliamentary research capacity by building an effective “research and data ecosystem”, including through key strategic partnership.

Following a brief presentation from panelists, the following questions will be addressed:

- *What is the role and place of evidence in parliamentary decision-making? What are the current challenges in the use of evidence and data by MPs and parliamentary administrations?*
- *How can MPs access evidence and data effectively using parliamentary tools and procedures?*
- *How do evidence and data from national statistics offices and national audit offices contribute to oversight processes in parliament?*
- *How can parliaments build a “research and data ecosystem” to better support impactful policy and decision-making in Parliament?*

Chairperson:

- **Ms. S. Attia**, Vice-Chairperson of the IPU Working Group on Science and Technology and Member of the House of Representatives (Egypt)

Panelists:

- **Dr. Denis Naughten**, Chairperson of the IPU Working Group on Science and Technology
- **Ms. Camila Friedriksen**, Governance Manager, INTOSAI Development Initiative
- **Ms. Alexandra Wilde**, Team Lead, Governance Data & Analytics, Global Policy Centre for Governance
- **Mr. MacDonald Mwiinga**, Adviser, National Assembly (Zambia)