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MOST Schools

Senior Official's Meeting

*First MOST Forum of Ministers of Social Development for the Asia-Pacific Region
Kuala Lumpur, 20-21 March 2017*



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A crucial need of policymakers

Decision makers in ministries with responsibility for social development addresses a series of difficult questions when choosing programs and policies.

They need to ensure that the best available research evidence informs public policies.





How to develop mechanisms to support the use of research evidence in developing responsive and effective public policies?

How to narrow the 'know-do gap'?



PROBLEM

SOLUTION

UNESCO offers MOST Schools as a “lean” mechanism which fulfils policymakers' needs.

Policymakers then test it, learn from it, and may refine it into contextualized and larger training programmes.

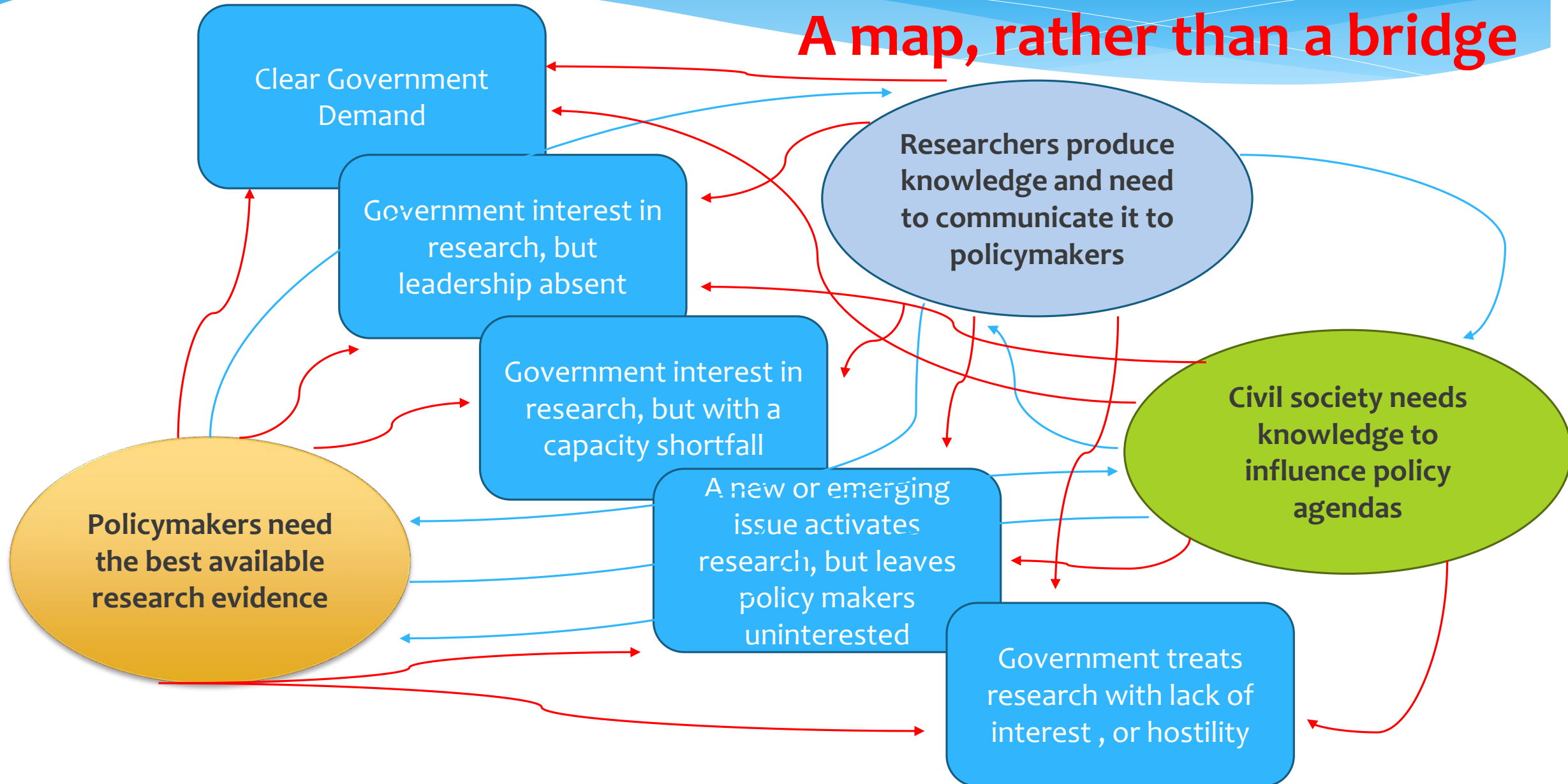
MOST Schools assist governments to adapt and innovate.

A bridge?



Five 'policy contexts'

A map, rather than a bridge

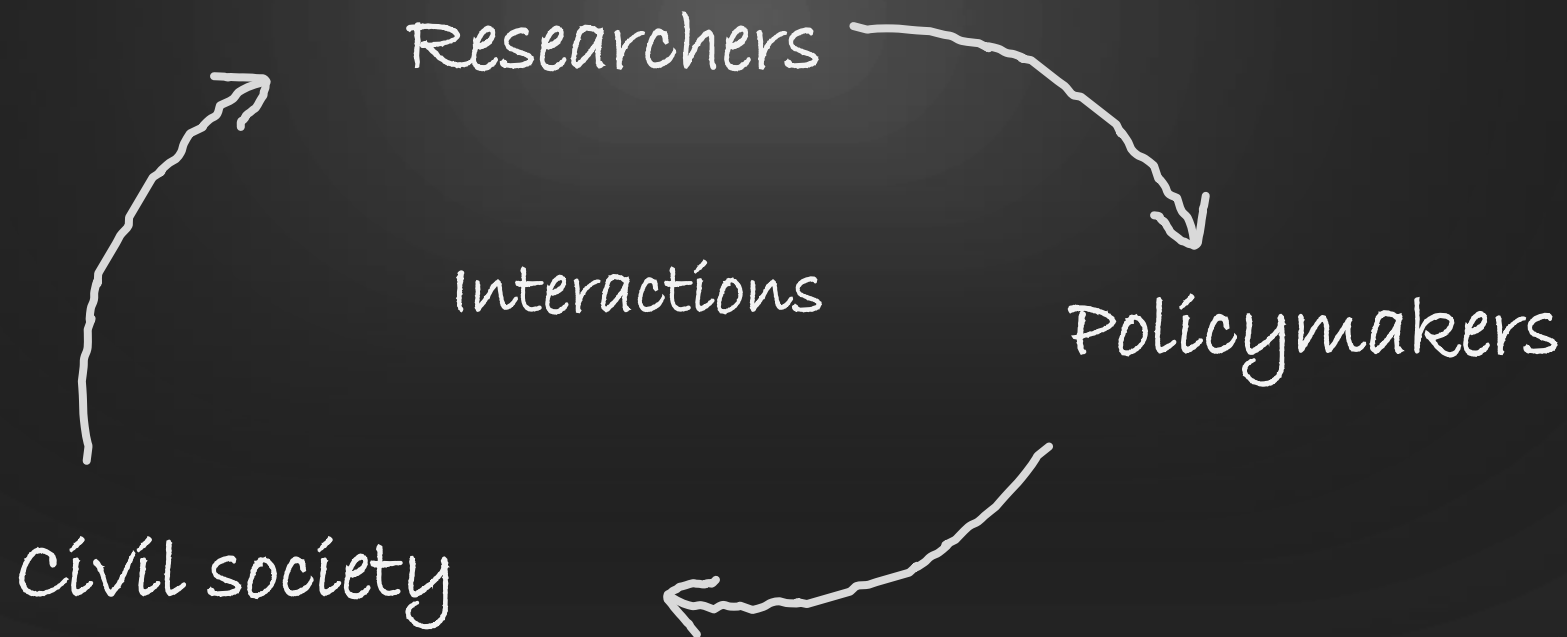


MOST Schools

A visit to the training classroom

MOST Schools: an innovative perspective

The focus is not on transferring of the results of research, but
on organizing the interactive process
between the producers and users of knowledge



MOST Schools

Custom 3 to 5-day training events with approximately 30 to 40 participants

A MOST School is a two-way process:

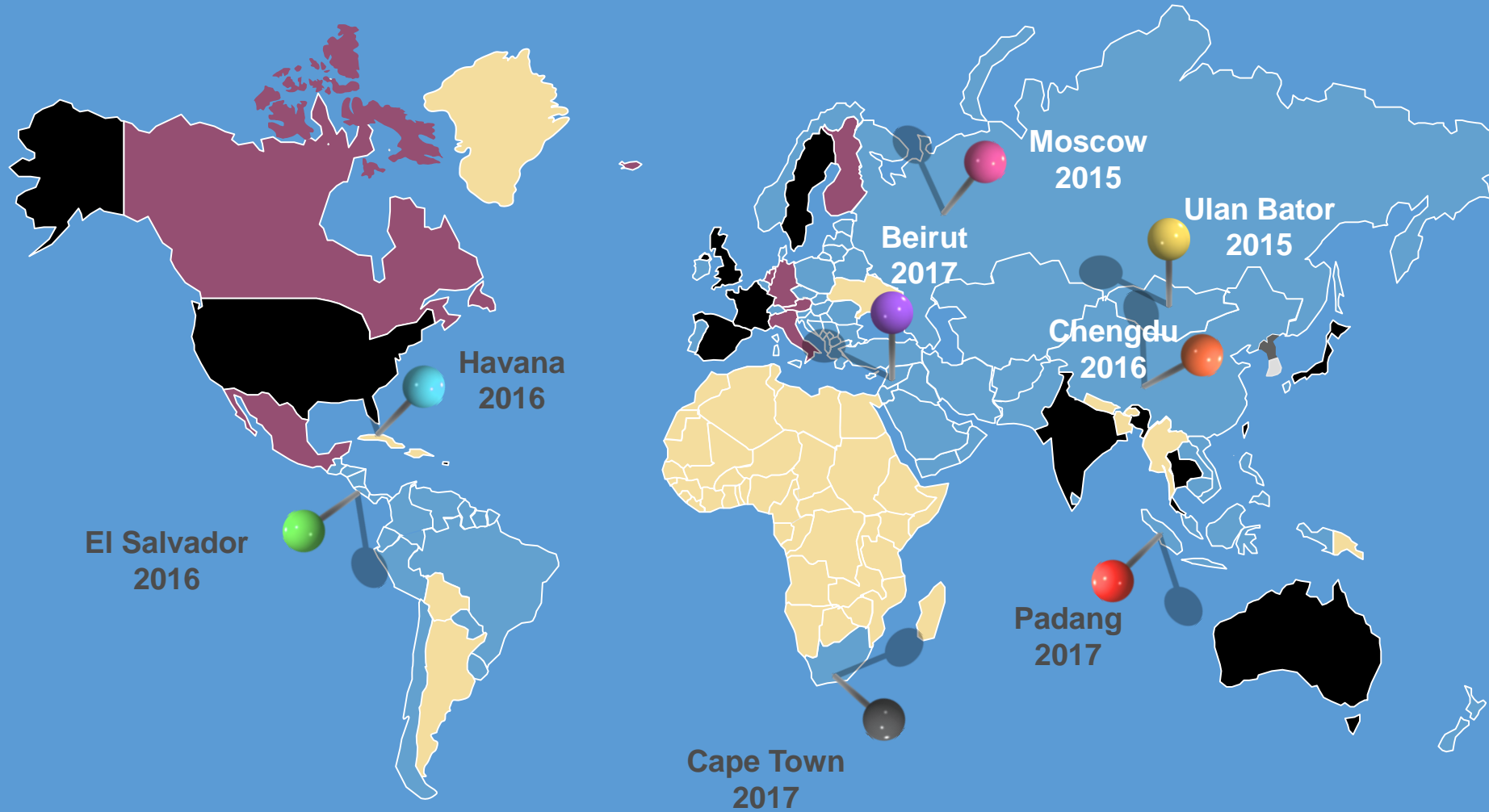
- > Encourage policy-makers and civil society to be more responsive to research findings, and
- > stimulate researchers to conduct policy-relevant research and translate their findings to be meaningful to policy-makers

MOST Schools

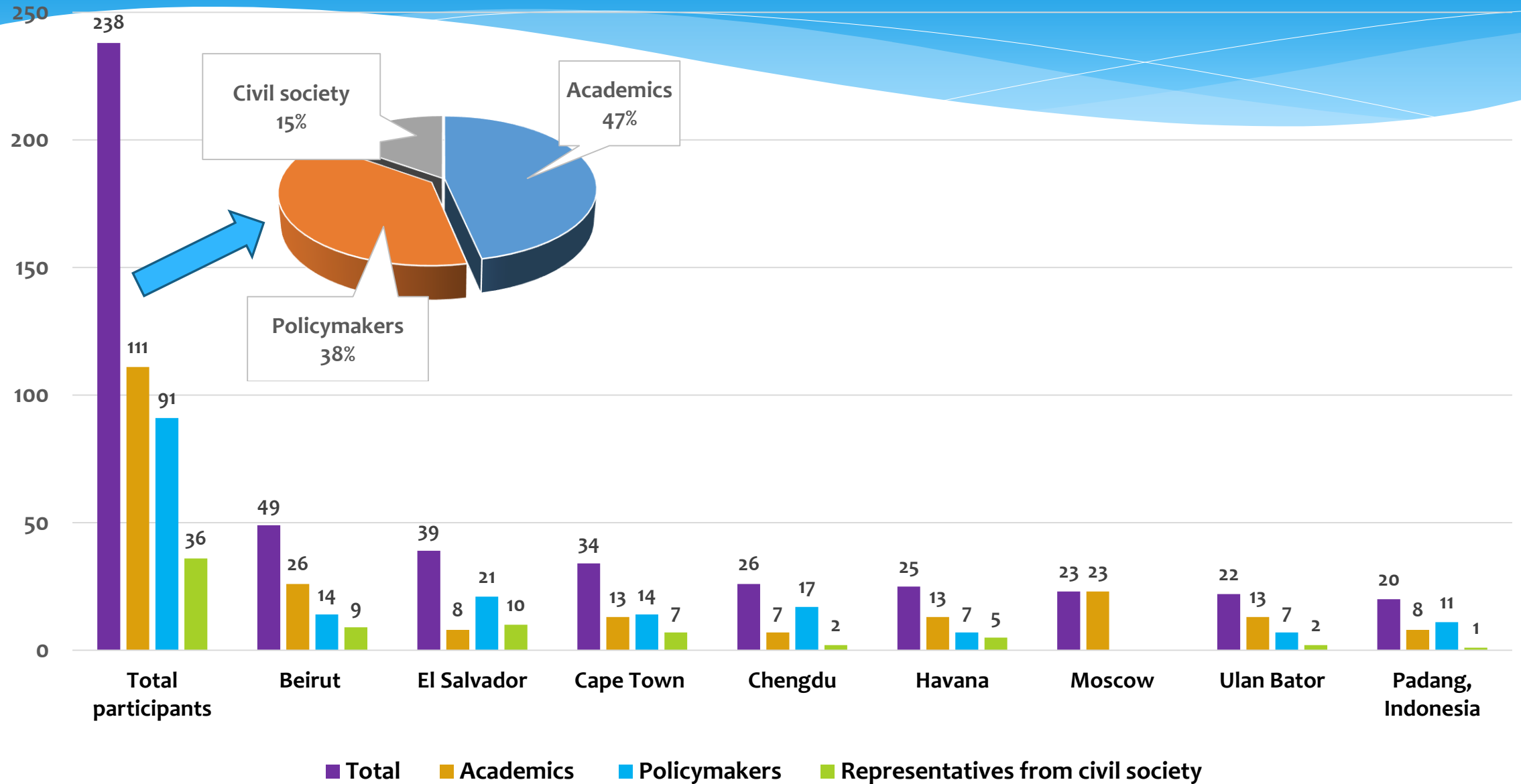
The "twin" questions:

- > What do policymakers want from researchers?
- > What do researchers think they should provide to policymakers?

MOST Schools 2015- 2017

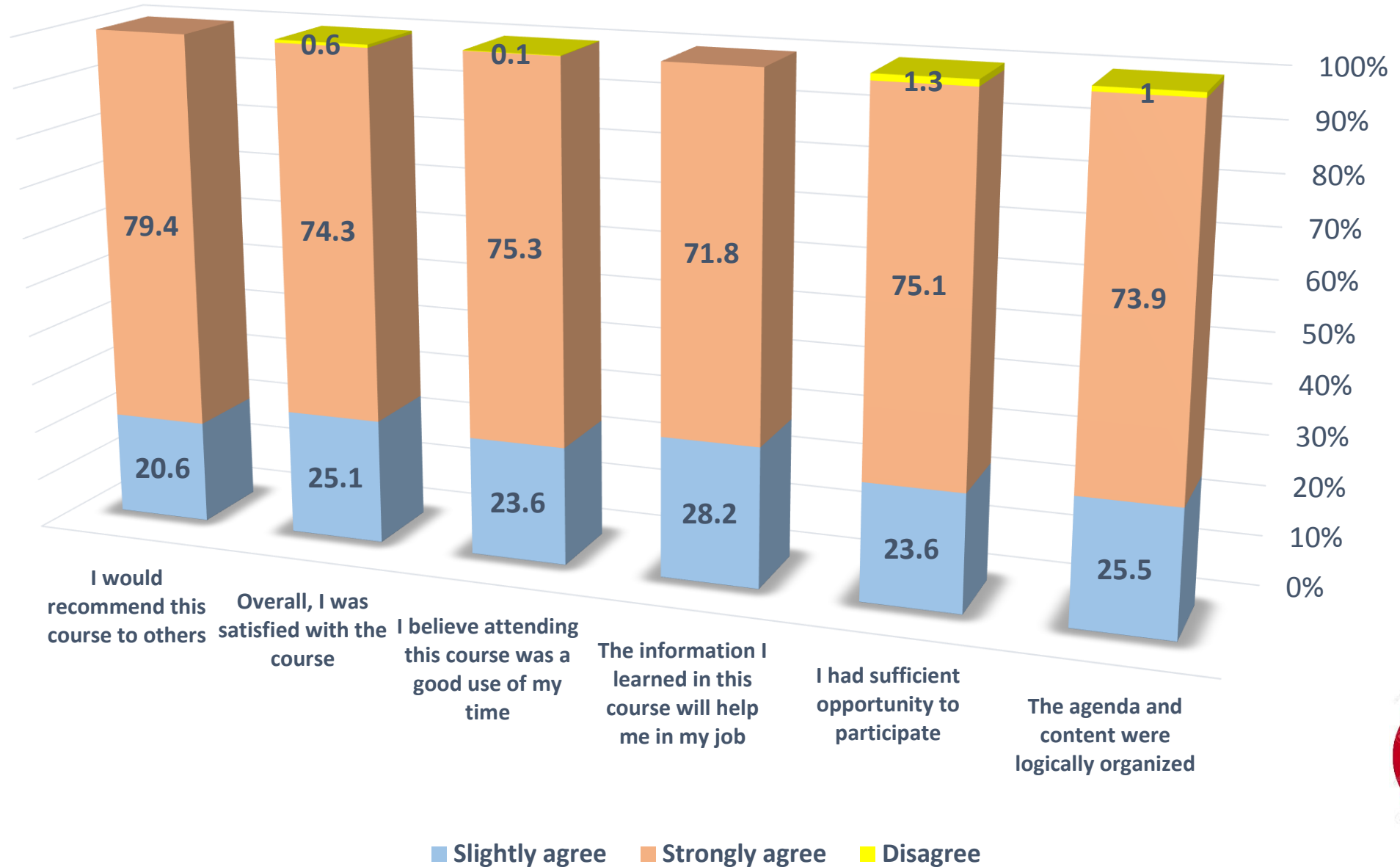


MOST Schools 2015-2017- Total number of participants and categories





A positive feedback on MOST Schools (%)



Key achievements of the MOST Schools



Participants acknowledged the value of a training format that allows them to take greater responsibility for their learning

Participants appreciated the benefits from exchanges combining intense intellectual activity coupled with personal experience

Structured and focused dialogues were facilitated –in highly contextual frameworks- for the benefit of more than two hundred stakeholders

-**71%** of participants were women

-Positive user experience rating:
74% of participants were strongly satisfied with the training received



Direct contribution to the education of Master Degree and Ph.D. students that participated in the training

Benefits of MOST Schools

	Direct participants in training	Policymaking institutions
Knowledge & Skills	<p>Participants from all categories improve their knowledge on how to network more effectively with other actors</p> <p>Participants start to find opportunities in problems: the 'know-do gap' offers chances for justifying creativeness in terms of interaction between diverse actors</p>	<p>Fulfil learning needs related to the institutional mandate of policy-makers: making a better use of evidence in public decision-making</p>
Organizational	<p>Intensive networking among diverse stakeholders</p>	<p>Enhanced understanding gained by researchers on the role of institutional process in the take up of research.</p>
Costs & Risks	<p>Free training opportunity</p>	<p>Contribute to distributing the costs & risks of innovative training amongst participating organizations.</p>

SUMMARY



MOST Schools received high ratings

MOST schools address concrete problems faced by communities of stakeholders

MOST schools leverage on the power of context

MOST schools aim at changing behaviours of stakeholders both by challenging their own perceptions and by encouraging participants to learn and sharing

MOST schools offer a cost-effective framework and a training programme that could contribute both to prepare and to follow-up MOST Ministerial Forums.



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THANK YOU

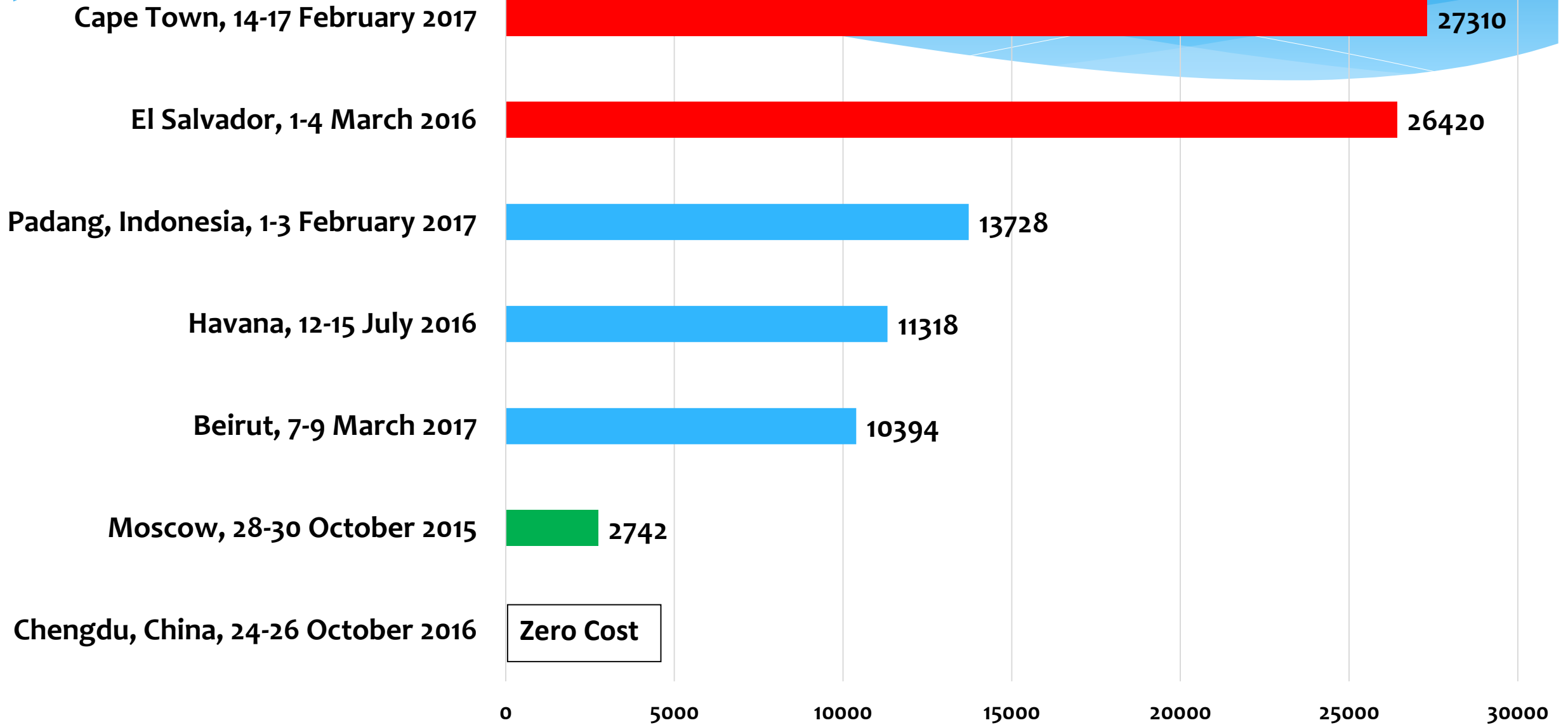
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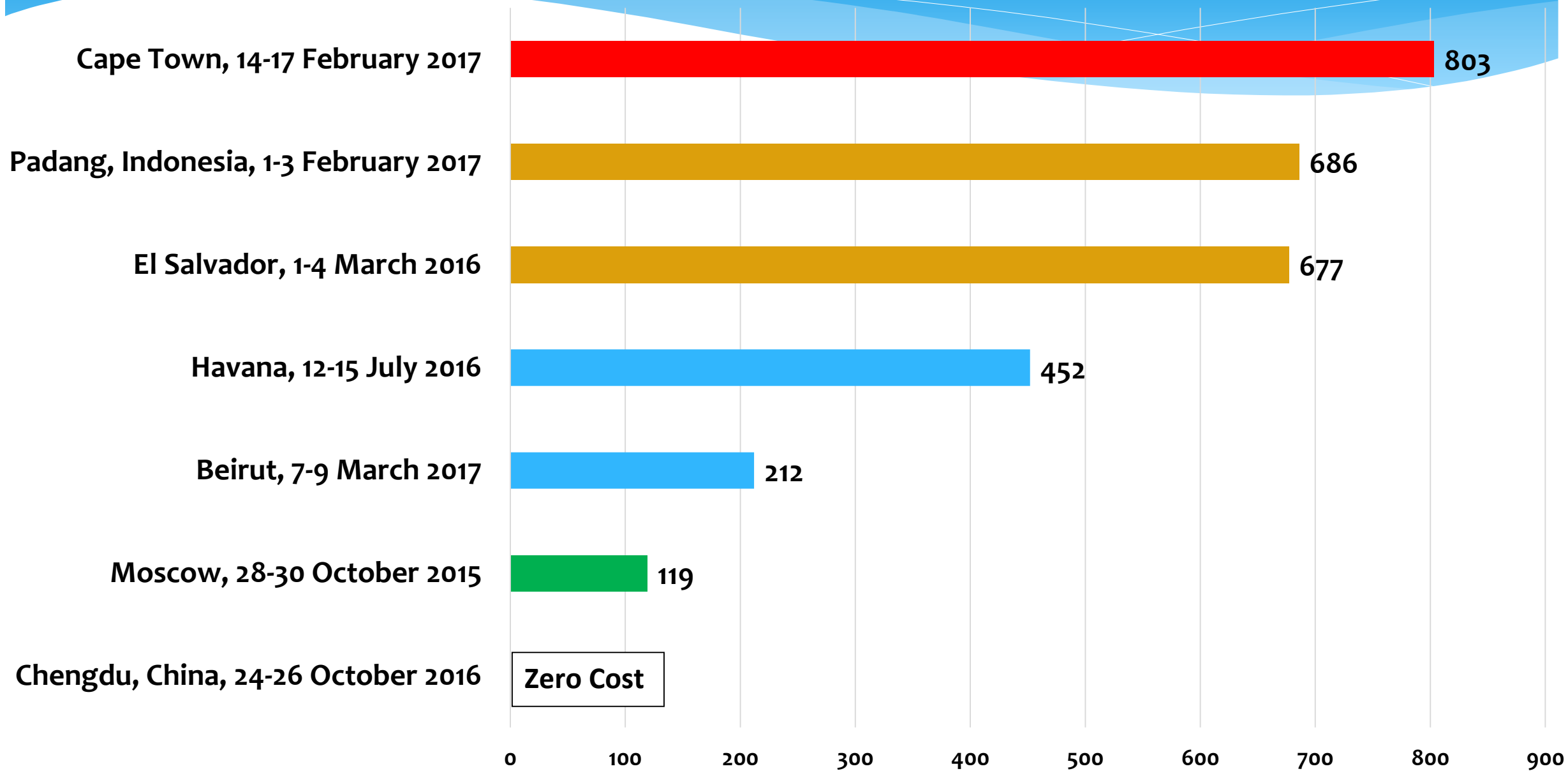


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Cost of MOST Schools to UNESCO (USD)



Cost per participant of MOST Schools to UNESCO (USD)



But,

Empirical studies show that the systematic application of research to policy-making is a **very uncommon event**, particularly in developing countries but not limited to them.

“There is a shortage of evidence on policy makers' actual capacity to use research evidence and there is even less evidence on effective strategies to build policy makers' capacity... A lack of capacity to understand research was perceived as beneficial to policy makers since it 'allowed' them to ignore evidence and instead follow their own agenda. Thus, there is not only a lack of capacity but also a disincentive to build capacity” (Newman et al. 2013, p. 1 & p. 7)

