

Delivering Evidence in 9 Days: How a Rapid Response Brief Shaped the Conversation around Screen Time in Brazil



Introduction

In a fast-moving policy environment where governments must act quickly on emerging social issues, Brazil's rapid response report on children's screen time offers a compelling example of how targeted, well-timed evidence can shape national priorities. The report was developed by [Instituto Veredas](#), a Brazilian non-profit and non-partisan organization that has a history of collaboration with federal agencies in Brazil – mostly those that have an institutionalized use of evidence.

When the new government took office in 2023, demand for evidence emerged from additional agencies, such as the Secretariat of Social Communication, who engaged Veredas in developing new evidence outputs. This rapid response report was designed to support government messaging on digital well-being, specifically, the growing concern around screen use among children and youth. Created under tight timelines and with no formal funding, the brief helped spark cross-ministerial coordination, a national family guide, and education policy reform. **This case study shows how clarity, collaboration, and strategic timing can turn a focused evidence product into a lever for broader policy change.**

The Challenge

When Brazil's new federal government took office in early 2023, it faced urgent questions on a range of [fast-emerging social and technological challenges](#). Among them were the risks and benefits of children's screen time. Though evidence-informed policymaking was not yet widely institutionalized across all ministries, the demand for actionable evidence was growing.



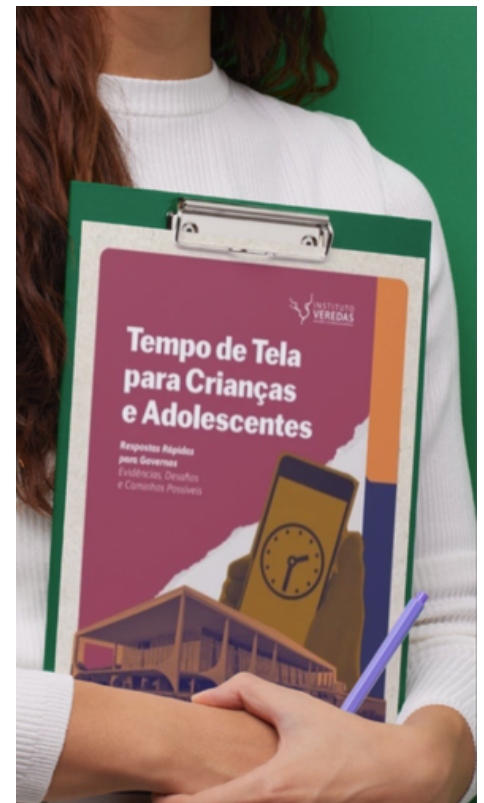
The Secretariat of Social Communication of the Presidency of Brazil responsible for managing the government's public engagement and messaging with citizens, needed quick, credible insights to help guide its messaging and actions on screen use among children. The topic was cross-cutting, politically salient, and an urgent priority for the administration, and the timeline to deliver this evidence was tight – only 9 days.

Design and Development

The Veredas team developed a rapid response report: a concise synthesis of global practices, research insights, and practical recommendations, using a flexible, demand-driven approach. Rather than conducting a new study, Veredas focused on credible curation and translation of existing knowledge – turning global evidence into a tool Brazilian policymakers could act on immediately.

While the Secretariat provided the overarching topic of screen use among children, Veredas worked closely with governmental stakeholders to help shape the specific research questions through collaborative design. The design prioritized:

- **Concise, targeted outputs:** The report was short, direct, and tailored specifically to the Secretariat's needs. It avoided technical jargon and dense background, focusing on what decision-makers needed to know.
- **Benchmarking global experience:** Drawing lessons from countries such as Chile and the United States, the report highlighted real-world approaches governments were using to address screen time in children. This provided both inspiration and credibility, allowing for discussion of practical, tested strategies.
- **Actionable recommendations:** In place of broad findings, the report offered clear, feasible, and context-appropriate recommendations, focusing on what would be suited to Brazil's policy context, not just in theory.



Veredas' rapid response report on screen time.

The Engagement Strategy

Although the initial audience was a single government agency, Veredas recognized the issue's broader relevance. After delivery, they sought permission to publicly disseminate the report. Once approved, Veredas:

- Redesigned the report for public use, creating a simplified version with colorful visuals and simplified text—graphics and styles that mirror the theme of youth
- Engaged media platforms to share key insights in a more story-driven, digestible format – publishing articles on external media platforms like Outra Saúde and internally on the Veredas website
- Pitched the findings across sectors and stakeholders, helping to bring the topic into broader public and political conversation

Meanwhile, the Secretariat of Social Communication of the Presidency of Brazil circulated the findings internally across multiple ministries, sparking discussion and spurring follow-on research.

The Impact

Within six months, the government launched a [national public engagement consultation on screen use](#), co-led by a coalition of ministries including Health, Education, Human Rights, Social Development, Justice, and Secretariat of Social Communication of the Presidency of Brazil.

This effort, grounded in the themes and insights of Veredas' report, led to three major outcomes:

- **A national guide for families**, a nearly 200-page handbook addressing the risks and opportunities of screen use, digital rights, and well-being, including practical tools for parents and youth; the public [announcement and launch of the guide](#) was also recorded and shared
- A **national communications campaign**, including [a promotional video](#) to boost awareness and uptake of the guide
- Major **education policy shifts**, including a [new law banning cell phone use in public schools](#) as part of a broader effort to reframe digital engagement among youth



Screenshot from Veredas' educational video on screen time.

While Veredas emphasizes that these were multifactor efforts, the team's report played a clear catalytic role. One team member reflected that although they do not claim causality, "we're proud to have helped kickstart the conversation."

Key Success Factors



1. Responsiveness to stakeholder needs:

By co-designing research questions, the reports stayed closely aligned with the Secretariat's specific interests, which made it more usable and relevant. "We delivered exactly what they wanted to know," the team said. The Veredas team also prioritized action by delivering a timely, well-scoped product even without formal resources or full analytical depth matching the window of opportunity.



2. Built credibility through global benchmarking:

Cross-country comparisons gave credibility and inspiration, helping Brazilian officials imagine feasible policy paths that felt more actionable.



3. Strategic and adaptive dissemination:

The team went beyond handoff, redesigning the product for broader public engagement and working with media to amplify the message, reach and relevance of their work.

Conclusion

What began as a short-term, lean product helped initiate longer-term, national cross-sectoral policy dialogue and change. Veredas' experience demonstrates how a streamlined evidence product can have an outsized influence, when they are well-timed, clearly framed, and strategically delivered. Most importantly, it affirms that **to make research policy-ready, outputs must be responsive, co-designed, and accessible**. The Veredas experience offers a compelling model for researchers, intermediaries, and governments striving to translate evidence into action, quickly and effectively, even within tight timelines and limited resources.

Related Resources

This case study is part of a four-part series, developed by Africa LEEPS, exploring effective evidence outputs that have successfully communicated information to policymakers in different contexts and were tailored for policy impact. To view the other case studies in this series, please click on the links below:

1. [Evidence that Works: The Anatomy of a High Impact Policy Output](#)
2. [Delivering Evidence in 9 Days: How a Rapid Response Brief Shaped the Conversation Around Screen Time in Brazil](#)
3. [Red Light, Green Light: How a Scorecard Turned Data into Progress in Nigeria](#)
4. [How Peer Exchange and Co-creation Laid the Foundation for National Data Reform in Togo](#)

About the Africa LEEPS Partnership

Africa LEEPS aims to advance the use of evidence in policymaking to support progress towards the SDGs. The partnership brings together leading evidence organizations from across Africa to learn from each other, exchange knowledge and experiences, and jointly problem solve – to strengthen evidence-informed policymaking and accelerate progress towards the SDGs.

Technical capacity strengthening and policy engagement activities are led by three initiatives: the Centre of Excellence Evidence Policy Action established by the [African Center for Equitable Development \(ACED\)](#), the East African Regional Evidence Synthesis Initiative established by the [Centre for Rapid Evidence Synthesis \(ACRES\)](#) and Alliance for Evidence and Equity in Policy-making in Africa established by the [African Institute for Policy Development \(AFIDEP\)](#).

[Results for Development \(R4D\)](#) serves as the learning and engagement coordinator for LEEPS.

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