

Rebuilding Trust. Experience from Latin America and the Caribbean

Carlos Scartascini

Expert Group Meeting
World Development Report 2025

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WHAT DO WE MEAN BY TRUST?

Trust is the belief that others will not act opportunistically.

People/firms/governments do not

- make promises they cannot keep,
- renege on promises they can keep,
- violate norms to take advantage of those who respect them

WHY IS TRUST **LOW**?

OPPORTUNISTIC BEHAVIOR IS MORE COMMON IN SOCIETIES WHERE THERE ARE AMPLE:

Information asymmetries

When information is scarce, people cannot distinguish between good or bad luck and the reliable or opportunistic behavior of others. Trust falls.

Power asymmetries

Unreliable behavior is not punished even if everyone is adequately informed about it.

TRUST **AND** CITIZENSHIP STRATEGY

TRUST SHOULD BE AN OBJETIVE OF PUBLIC POLICY



The uninformed are more likely to believe (correctly) that others will take advantage of them.

REFORMS THAT **INFORM**



The powerless are more likely to believe (correctly) that others will take advantage of them.

REFORMS TO
STRENGTHEN INSTITUTIONS

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INFORM AND COMMUNICATE

PUBLIC SECTOR REFORMS: TRANSPARENCY AND COMMUNICATION

Test scores in schools

Crime rates by neighborhood

Mortality rates in hospitals

Subnational government performance



MAKE

COMMUNICATE

KEEP



PROMISES

Reducing information asymmetries

MAPA DE OBRAS

Encontrá acá algunas de las cosas que hicimos juntos y mirá en pilar.gov.ar/500diasjuntoavos el mapa completo de obras y de todo lo que vamos haciendo.

Referencias - Obras

- Consolidados de calles
- Pavimentaciones
- Veredas construidas
- Plan Hidráulico Pilar
- Instituciones educativas mejoradas
- Obras en hospitales y CAPs

Pilar

TAMBIÉN PODES ESCANEAR EL MAPA!

Acceder a la información pública es tu derecho

Presentá tu solicitud en:

- Mesas de entrada
- Comunas
- buenosaires.gob.ar/informaciónpublica

BA
Vamos Buenos Aires

BA Elige
Participación Ciudadana

INFORM: EVIDENCE

CITIZENS MISTRUST OPAQUE GOVERNMENTS

TRANSPARENCY ABOUT PROMISES AND FULFILLMENT INCREASES TRUST

A. Sample of public commitments



100 percent of street corners
wheelchair accessible



10,000 security cameras
around the city and
on public transportation



1,000 more police
officers on the street



30 new schools with
classrooms for 3-year-olds



20,000 families are homeowners
with the support of the City
of Buenos Aires



12 sports centers and four
large parks renovated

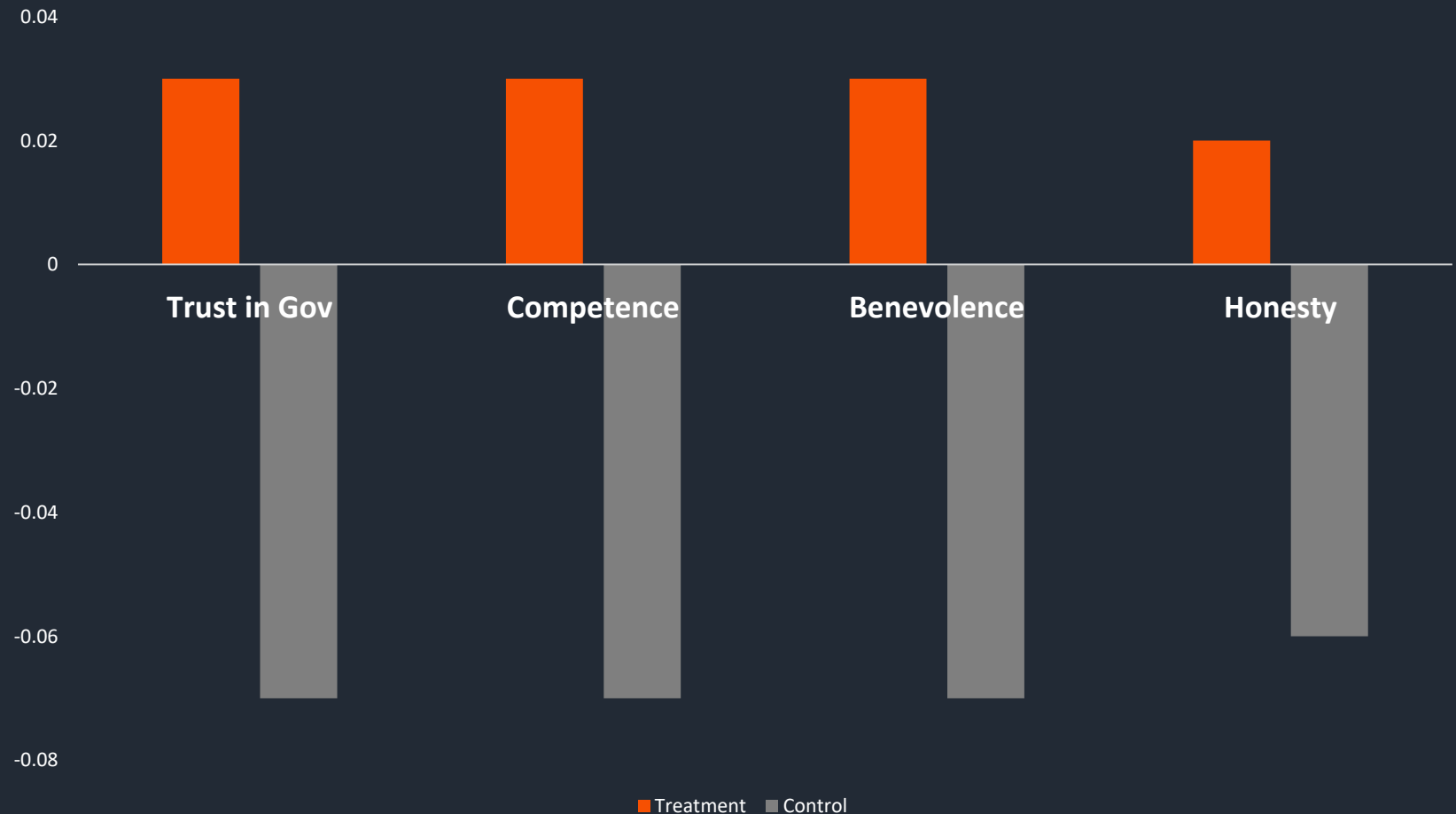
INFORM: EVIDENCE

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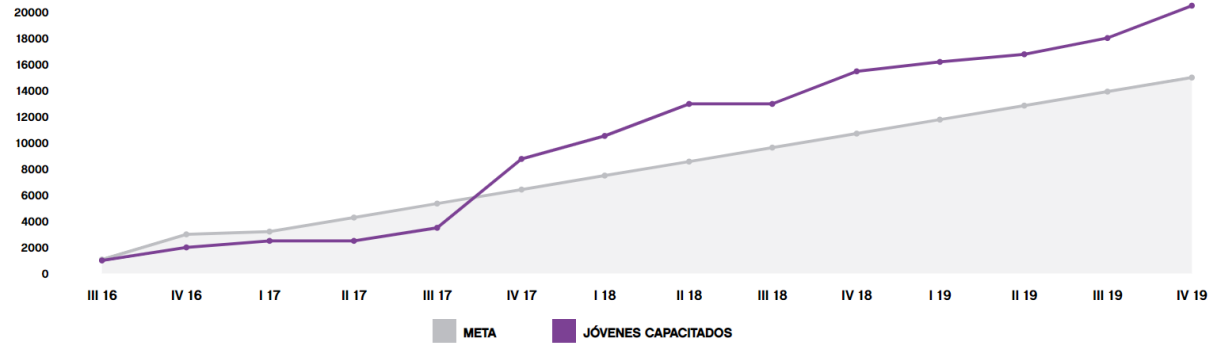
BUENOS AIRES SURVEY

INFORMATION THAT GOVERNMENT
FULFILLED OR DID NOT FULFILL ITS
PROMISES

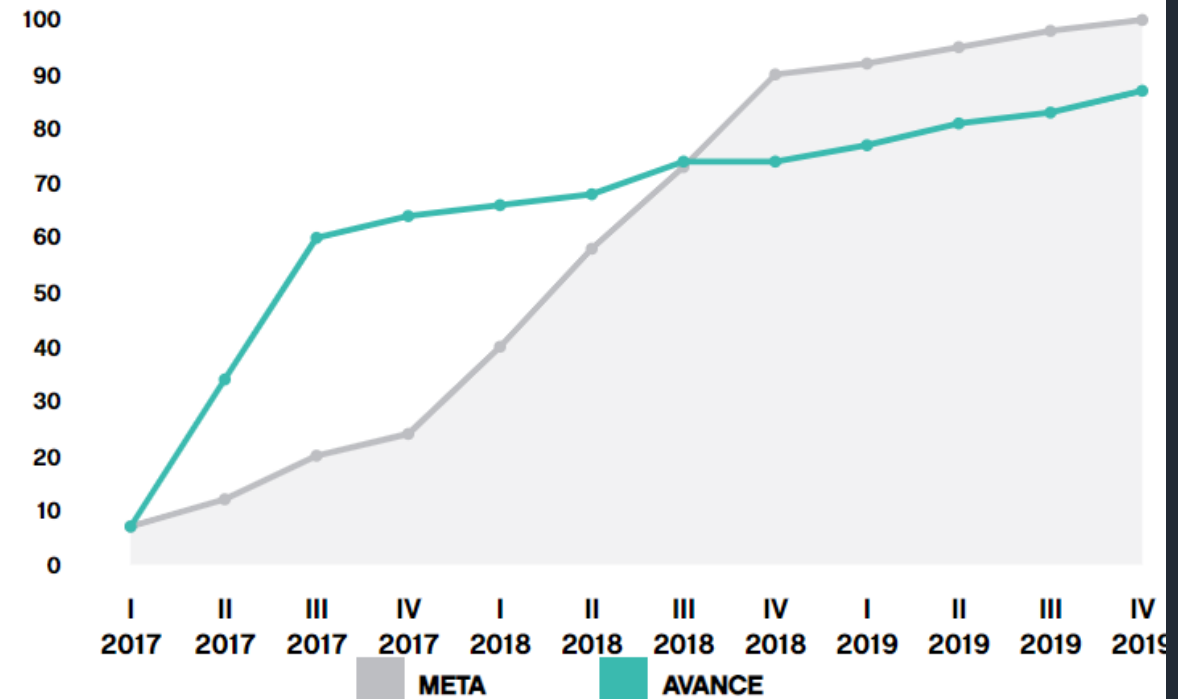


INFORM: EVIDENCE

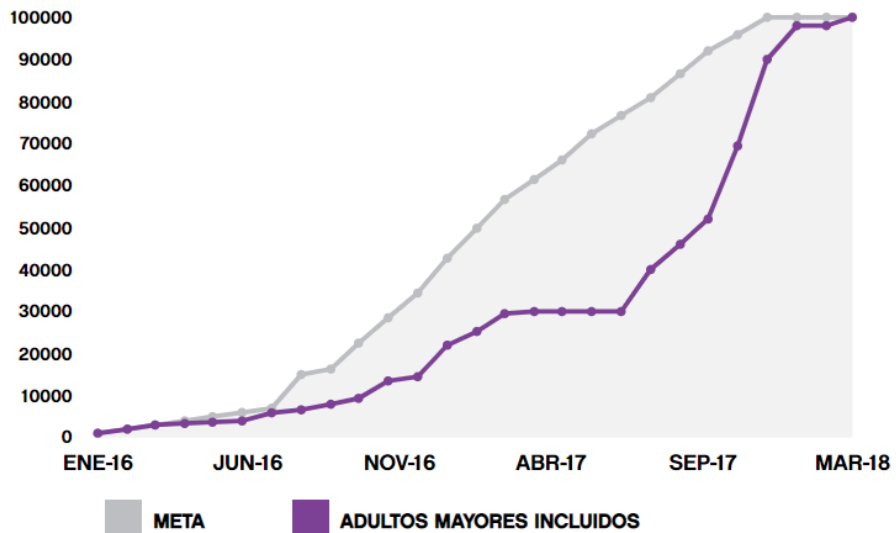
Cantidad de jóvenes capacitados en el programa "Empleos del Futuro"



Construcción de obra hidráulica, en porcentajes



Tablets gratuitas distribuidas a adultos mayores



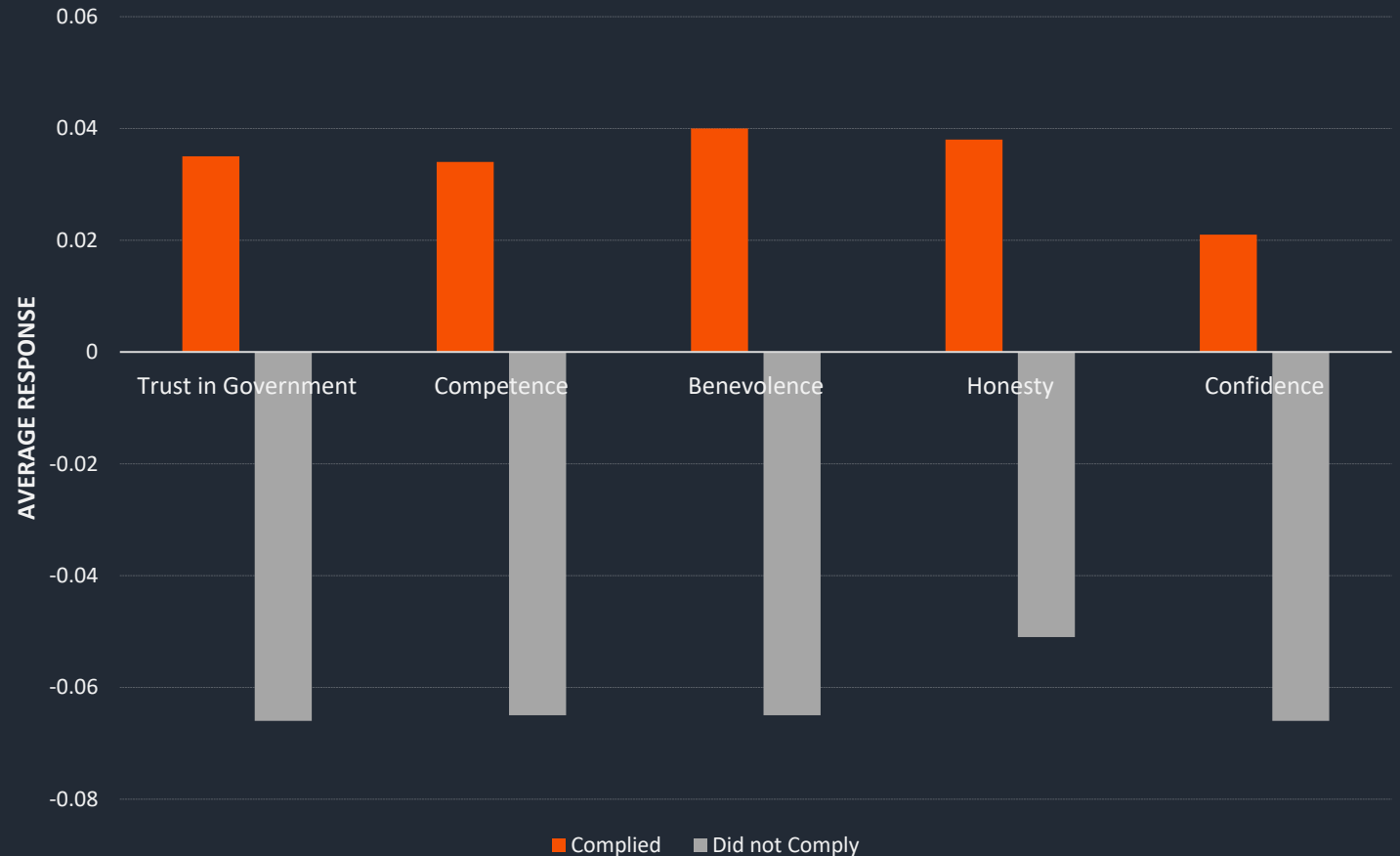
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BUENOS AIRES SURVEY

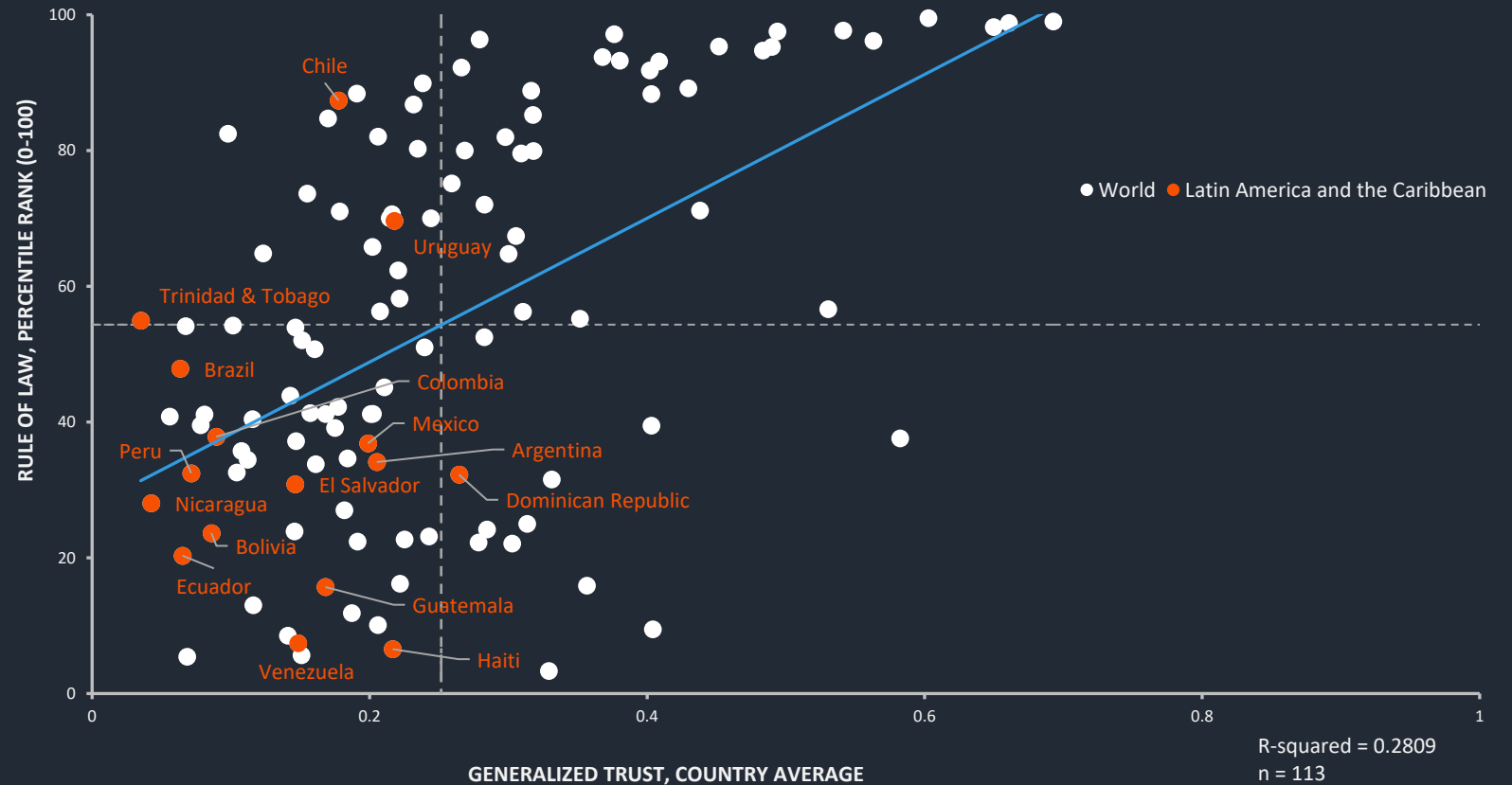
INFORMATION THAT GOVERNMENT FULFILLED OR DID NOT FULFILL ITS PROMISES



EMPOWER: SUPPORT FOR THE RULE OF LAW

RULE OF LAW: LAWS, CONTRACTS, AND PROPERTY RIGHTS PREDICTABLY AND SYSTEMATICALLY ENFORCED.

TRUST RISES SHARPLY WITH THE RULE OF LAW



EMPOWER: SUPPORT THE RULE OF LAW

We typically think of tax administration reform in terms of revenue maximization, but . . .



Fair and systematic enforcement of the
obligations of citizenship

For example



Fair and efficient
tax enforcement

EMPOWER: INCREASE THE CAPACITY OF GOVERNMENTS TO FULFILL PROMISES

We typically think about public sector reform in terms of efficiency.

Two other key outcomes:

- Empowering citizens by aligning incentives of public servants with interests of citizens.
- Enabling government to fulfill promises.



Public sector management reform aims to align.

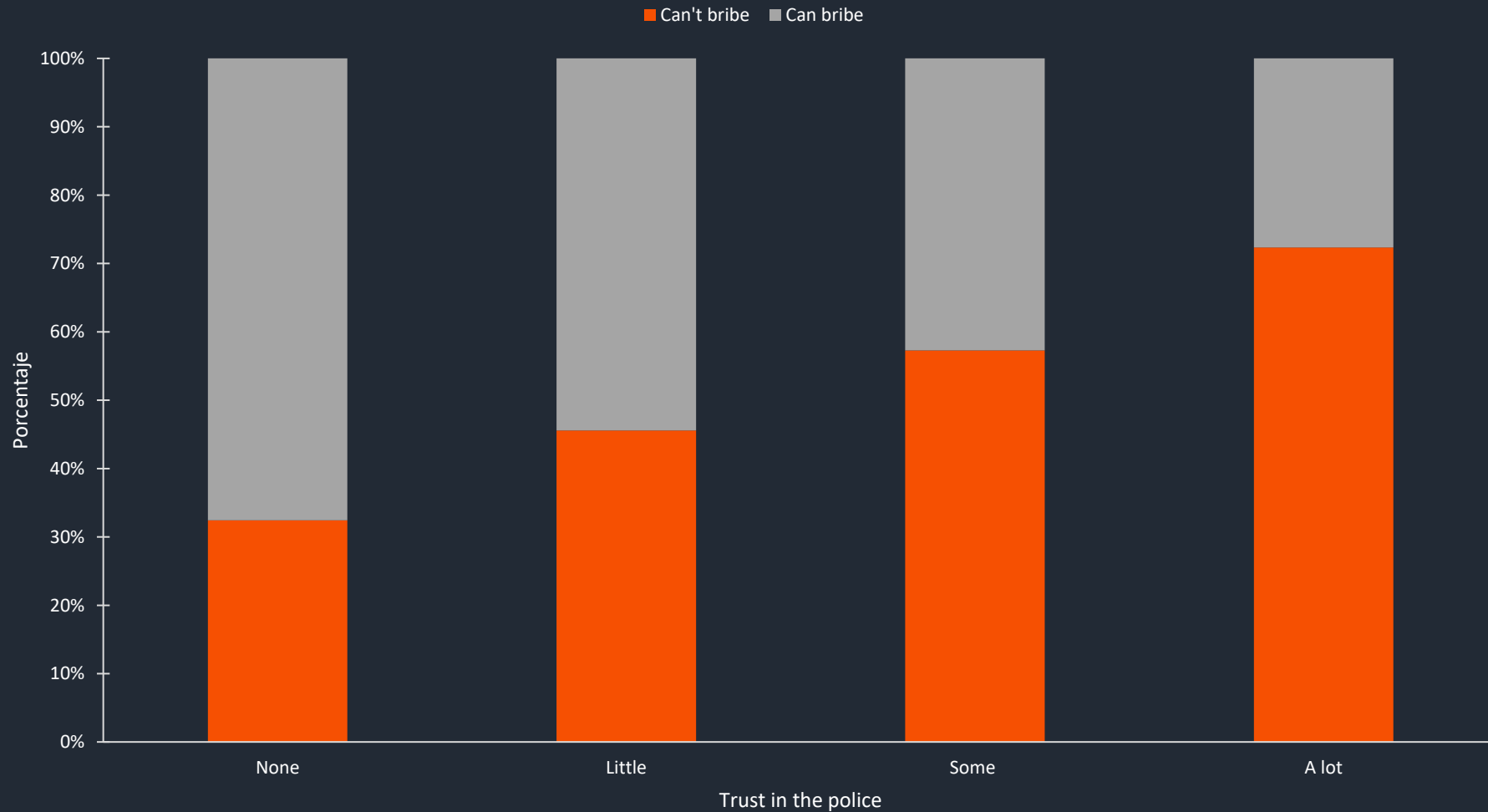
For example



Police recruitment and training

Information systems to track policing performance

EMPOWER: INCREASE THE CAPACITY OF GOVERNMENTS TO FULFILL PROMISES



EMPOWER AND INFORM: REGULATORY AND SUPERVISION AGENCIES



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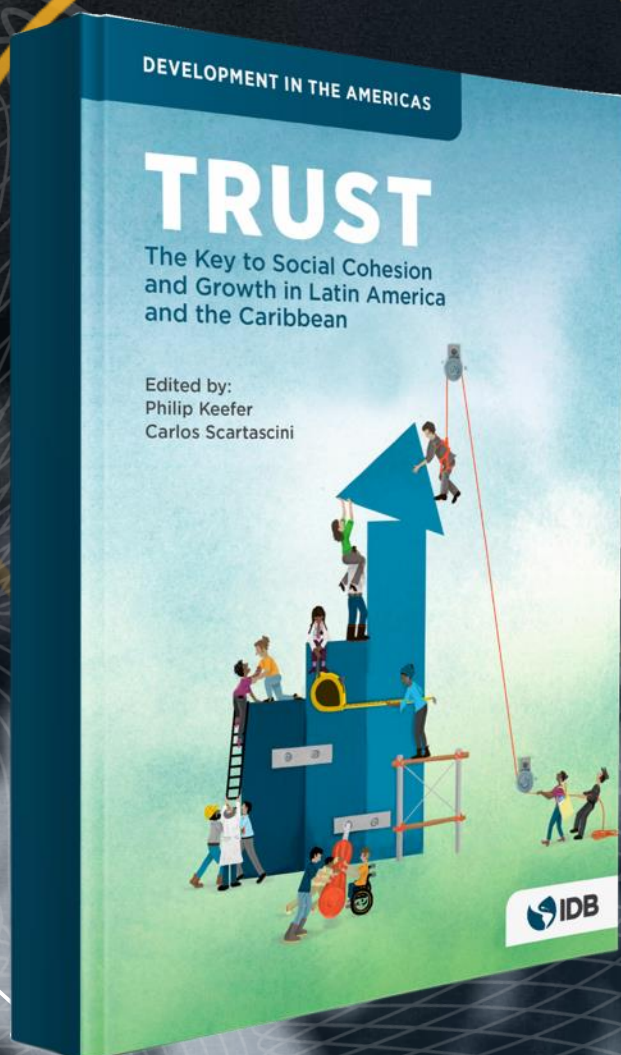
REFORMS THAT INFORM



REFORMS TO
STRENGTHEN INSTITUTIONS

TRUST SHOULD BE AN OBJETIVE OF POLITICS

- Create a common identity
- **Strengthen positive social norms**
- **Be efficient and effective but also people should believe the government is benevolent**
 - In most languages, trust has a component of hope and faith



TRUST

The Key to Social Cohesion and Growth in Latin America and the Caribbean

DOWNLOAD THE REPORT:
www.iadb.org/DIAtrust