**Policy Brief Exercise 1:**

1. Read the two policy briefs provided and try to address the following queries:

* How are they similar? How are they different?
* Read them closely, looking for ways in which the writer selected and presented evidence to support his or her recommenda­tion.
* Go through each brief, circling all the places that present evidence and underlining all the places that convey an opinion regarding or analysis of that evidence.
* Identify the main points of the argument and determine how they are used to tell a simple, logical story that leads to the author’s conclusions.

***General Approach to Critiquing a Policy Brief***

A policy brief critique generally includes each of the following:

* Summary of the brief (e.g. description of global health issue, why it is a problem, intended audience, overview of challenges, recommendations, etc.)
* Critique of the brief (e.g. appropriate use of tone, language, and style for intended audience, logical flow, inclusion of 4 key elements, weight given to each element, success conveying a clear and concise view of a problem and recommendations, etc.)
* Ways to improve the brief (e.g. include missing information, give more weight to specific key elements, provide more evidence or opinion, incorporate additional de­tails on recommendations, etc.)

***Key Questions to Consider in Your Critique***

* What global health problem is the brief addressing?
* Who is the intended audience? How do the tone, style, language, and level of detail reflect the needs of that particular audience?
* What role does evidence play in the brief’s introduction?
* Does the brief have a logical flow? Can you identify the four “key elements” (i.e. why the issue deserves attention, challenges to addressing the issue, presentation of op­tions or interventions available, and a compelling recommendation for action)? How much weight is given to each?
* How are the recommendations laid out on the page? Is the level of detail given to some of the options significantly different from that given to others?
* How do headers, pull-out quotes, boxes, graphs, references, tables, pictures, and/ or charts strengthen the brief?

• Is the entire brief a mix of evidence and opinion, or are some sections weighted more toward one or the other? If there are differences, at what point or points does the balance shift from presenting evidence to opinion?

• What conclusions do you draw after considering the delineation and analysis of options? Do you feel that the author is leading you in one direction or another? Why?

• Is this brief effective in conveying a clear and concise view of a problem and per­suasively presenting solutions for remedying it?

• Is there any information you feel is missing and should have been included in the brief?

(Source: A Student's Guide to Writing a Global Health Policy Brief 2017 by the Harvard Global Health Education and Learning Incubator; [www.http://gheli.harvard.edu](http://www.http://gheli.harvard.edu))