Research Utilization Toolkit

What Is Research Utilization?

Research utilization refers to the application of evidence to policies, programs and practice to improve outcomes. Research utilization involves various strategies including stakeholder engagement and collaborative research, the use of champions, the use of knowledge brokers, and advocacy and communication, and is bi-directional. It links current research with opportunities to inform policy, programs, and practice. At the same time, it facilitates the use of experience from programs, policies, and practice to inform new research agendas (see graphic).

Research utilization is relevant for many fields. Within health, we know that there is a large gap between knowledge production and knowledge application. According to one estimate, it takes an average of 17 years for health-related research results to be incorporated into routine practice. Moreover, only 14% of findings actually make the transition from research to practice within two decades of their discovery. With so many pressing health needs around the world and competing demands for limited funding, attention is increasingly focusing on how to introduce and scale-up evidence-based practices.

This toolkit has been developed to help researchers and practitioners address this knowledge-to-practice gap, particularly those working in international reproductive health. It provides users with evidence-based information to help facilitate the research utilization process. The first few tabs provide a thorough background on research utilization, including terminology used in the field, common barriers and challenges, accepted research utilization strategies, and information on scaling up successfully-tested interventions.

The remaining content is organized to help different health professionals (i.e., researchers, program managers, and policy-makers) identify the actions they can take to increase the chances that research results will be applied to programs, policies, and practice in their settings. Practical tools and case studies of successful research utilization projects are also included throughout the toolkit. While many of the toolkit's resources focus on reproductive health, the
research utilization strategies are applicable to other technical areas.

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What are K4Health Toolkits?

What is the purpose of the Research Utilization Toolkit?

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What are K4Health Toolkits?

K4Health Toolkits are electronic collections of carefully selected information resources on a particular topic for health policy makers, program managers, and service providers. They are based on a continuous publishing principle that allows them to evolve after publication to capture additional resources and to identify and fill remaining information gaps.

What is the purpose of the Research Utilization Toolkit?

This toolkit contains resources selected by the staff of FHI 360 to help policy makers, program managers, service providers, researchers and other audiences improve programs to assist in research utilization - the application of evidence to policies, programs and practice to improve outcomes.

What types of resources are included in this toolkit?

This toolkit provides a one-stop source for reliable, relevant, and usable information about research utilization, which involves various strategies including stakeholder engagement and collaborative research, the use of champions, the use of knowledge brokers, and advocacy and communication, and is bi-directional. It links current research with opportunities to inform policy, programs, and practice. At the same time, it facilitates the use of experience from programs, policies, and practice to inform new research agendas. The resources were selected with health policy makers, program managers, and service providers in mind.

Who should use this toolkit?

- **Policy makers**, to: help understand how to identify and assess evidence that may be helpful to your programs; learn more about incorporating evidence into your decision-making process; and find resources and tools to help you advocate for evidence-based policies and programs.
- **Program managers**, to: identify strategies to help move successfully tested health interventions into practice; find resources on how to scale up health interventions; and get tips on how to be involved in the research process.
- **Researchers**, to: read about evidence-based research utilization strategies in peer-reviewed journals; find tools to help you apply research utilization concepts and strategies to the design, implementation, and dissemination of your research and how to become involved in advocacy for policy and program change; and learn how to measure the effectiveness of different research utilization strategies.

How should this toolkit be used?

Research utilization is relevant for many fields. Within health, we know that there is a large gap between knowledge production and knowledge application. This toolkit has been developed to help researchers and practitioners address this knowledge-to-practice gap. It provides users with evidence-based information to help facilitate the research utilization process.

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To browse the content of this toolkit, use the navigation to view resources related to key program topics. You can also use the search box if you know what you are looking for or have a specific item in mind.

Resources in this toolkit can be downloaded and adapted for teaching and training, research, advocacy, policy-making, and program management purposes. Some of the tools are readily available in adaptable formats (for example, Microsoft PowerPoint presentations or Word documents). We encourage you to alter and personalize these tools for your own use. (Please remember to credit the source.) If you do use these tools or adapt them, we would love to hear from you. Please e-mail us at toolkits@k4health.org and include the name of the toolkit in the subject line of your message.

Who developed this toolkit?

FHI 360 staff selected the resources based on a search for relevant published and grey literature, and on staff experience working in the field.

How can I suggest a resource to include in this toolkit?

We invite you to participate in the evolution and enhancement of this toolkit. If you have developed or use quality resources that you think should be included, please use the feedback form to suggest them. The toolkit collaborators will review and consider your suggestions.

How can I make a comment or give feedback about this toolkit?

If you have comments about the toolkit, please use the feedback form. Your feedback will help to ensure that the toolkit remains up-to-date and is continually improved. For example, you can share ideas about how you have used the toolkit in your work so that others can adapt what they learn from your experiences.
General Information

There remains a fundamental gap between the generation of research findings and the application of the findings in practice. (1)

This introductory section of the toolkit includes general information on the terminology used in the research utilization field, on theories and frameworks that support research utilization, and on common barriers and challenges to getting research results into programs, policies, and practice.

Overview

Terminology

Theories & Frameworks

Barriers & Challenges

Online communities, forums, listserves
General Information Overview

Rather than focusing on any one aspect of research utilization, the following resources cover the overall field of research utilization. Included are an annotated bibliography of research utilization and several documents that examine research utilization from the perspective of different participants in the process (e.g., researchers, decision-makers, donors).

Resources:

- **Eight Strategies for Research to Practice**

  This primer introduces a set of eight strategies to help close the gap between research and practice. The strategies are based on a growing body of evidence, theoretical frameworks, case studies and published guidance. The strategies explain how to plan, implement and disseminate research to facilitate its translation into practice. They also describe the most effective ways to incorporate research results into policies and programs.

- **Systematic Review: What are the effects of interventions to improve the uptake of evidence from health research into policy in low and middle-income countries?**

  The primary aim of this systematic review was to assess the state of the evidence-base on interventions to increase the uptake of research findings into health policies in low and middle-income countries. A secondary aim related to identifying barriers and facilitators of research uptake, and for this element we also included evidence from non-intervention studies. It included a total of 54 studies, 25 of which focused on an intervention, broadly defined as any action undertaken to facilitate the translation of health research evidence into health policy and policy implementation. The most frequently cited components of interventions...
reporting positive effects on policy development included carrying out local research (e.g. for contextualisation of international recommendations or for collecting epidemiological data), ensuring intensive stakeholder engagement and collaboration, including training and capacity-building activities (for a variety of stakeholders), and fostering community participation. Across the whole range of 54 intervention and non-intervention studies considerable emphasis is given to barriers and facilitators to uptake of research evidence, echoing many reported elsewhere in the literature. The author summarize key messages in the conclusions section (p.47).

• Maximizing Utilization of Research

This short brief from the Population Council's Frontiers in Reproductive Health Program provides pointers and suggestions for ensuring that research results are used in programs and policies, drawing from 10 years of international reproductive health programming. Links to examples and case studies are provided.

• From News to Everyday Use: The Difficult Art of Implementation

This literature review from Sweden was conducted to help public health planners, prevention coordinators, and others overcome the challenges of implementing new methods to promote public health. The end of the review contains an implementation checklist to help users incorporate many of the components for successful implementation. The checklist is free to copy and use.

• Turning Research into Practice: Suggested Actions from Case-Studies of Sexual and Reproductive Health Research

This link takes you to a report of two technical consultations that the World Health Organization convened in 2003 and 2004 on the topic of research utilization. The report is divided into two main sections: one on concepts and pathways of research utilization and one on case studies. The book is intended to help readers increase the utilization of research and monitor the extent to which evidence is used to improve sexual and reproductive health.

• Conceptualizing and Combining Evidence for Health
System Guidance

This document reviews how research-based evidence is treated by the scientists who produce it, those who formulate guidance, and those who make program and policy decisions. It also examines the deliberative process of combining different forms of evidence to produce guidance for health systems.

• Knowledge Translation in Global Health

This short journal article defines knowledge translation and discusses the "know-do" gap, some of the causes of the gap, and efforts to close it.

• Bridging Research and Policy: Insights from 50 Case Studies

This paper is a comparative analysis of 50 case studies collected during the first phase of the Global Development Network (GDN) Bridging Research and Policy project, launched in 1999 to support and link research and policy institutes involved in development. As part of the first phase of the three-year Global Development Network (GDN) Bridging Research and Policy project, the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) was responsible for the collection and analysis of 50 summary case studies on research-policy links. The cases were examined to address the question: why are some ideas that circulate in the research-policy arenas picked up and acted on, while others are ignored and disappear? The discussion is structured around a framework of three interlinked domains: context, evidence, links.

• Going Beyond Research: A Key Issues Paper Raising Discussion Points Related to Dissemination, Utilisation and Impact of Reproductive and Sexual Health Research

This key issues paper is drawn from the two-day workshop "Moving Beyond Research to Influence Policy," held at the University of Southampton in January 2001. The paper considers research utilization from the perspectives of decision-makers, researchers, and donors. It also explores the relationships among these three groups.
The concept of research utilization is known by many names. One study of 33 international funding organizations found 29 different terms used to refer to it. Among the most common were knowledge exchange, knowledge transfer, knowledge translation, and research to practice.

Although it can be confusing when these terms are used interchangeably, they all refer to the complex process of bridging the gap that often exists between research results and their use in policy, programs, and practice. For the purpose of this toolkit, we will use the term research utilization. However, individual resources featured in the toolkit may use some of the alternative terms.

The glossaries listed below define and explain the usage of a variety of additional terms common to the field of research utilization. The glossaries are intended to increase your general understanding of research utilization and help you explore the rest of the toolkit.

Resources:

- Glossary of Key Terms: Research Utilization
Here you will find an extensive list of definitions of key terms and concepts related to research utilization. Definitions have been quoted directly from other documents or modified from expert sources.

• **A Glossary for Dissemination and Implementation Research in Health**

  This abstract is for a journal article (full text available for a fee) containing a glossary of the key concepts and terms of dissemination and implementation research in both public health and clinical settings. Additional information on dissemination and study implementation is provided in other sections of the toolkit.

• **Lost in Knowledge Translation: Time for a Map?**

  This abstract is for a journal article that reviews the vocabulary of research utilization and offers a conceptual framework for integrating the creation and application of knowledge. The authors of the article argue that consensus about the language of research utilization is necessary for the field to advance.

• **Registry of Knowledge Translation: Glossary**

  This website includes a short list of key terms used in research utilization. Some of the definitions have been tailored specifically for the registry’s content and purpose. Other tools are also available on the site to help in planning, conducting, and evaluating different types of knowledge translation activities, including knowledge dissemination, knowledge synthesis, knowledge exchange, and knowledge application.

• **Glossary of Knowledge Exchange Terms**

  This glossary explains such terms as knowledge application, knowledge dissemination, knowledge exchange, and knowledge synthesis in the context of the utilization of public health research. The glossary appears with the caveat that the definitions reflect usage by the Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement.
Theories & Frameworks

Research utilization includes a large body of work dedicated to theories and frameworks. Although no one overarching theory or framework exists, most of the theories highlight core components of research utilization that are necessary for its success. These core components relate to the evidence itself, how the research was conducted, and the "translation" process. They include analyzing potential barriers to utilization, communicating with stakeholders, and evaluating outcomes of research utilization efforts.

Researchers and end-users of research can benefit from understanding and applying a range of theories and frameworks to their work. Finding the right fit between a particular theory and the context in which the research is being applied is critical for successful research utilization.

Listed below are resources that describe and give examples of some of the most prominent theories and frameworks in the field of research utilization. Familiarity with these ideas, although often abstract, will be helpful in understanding the more concrete research utilization strategies discussed elsewhere in the toolkit. Several of the resources also include images to help you visualize the research utilization process and checklists of the criteria that are important for successful research utilization efforts.

Resources:

- **Guide for Monitoring Scale-up of Health Practices and Interventions**

  This guide is intended to provide governments, donors, country organizations, and implementing partners with a low cost and replicable approach to monitoring the process of scaling up innovations in health. The goal is to assist country stakeholders with identifying if scale-up is happening as intended; where, if necessary, there need to be mid-course
corrections; and if the practice can be sustained to achieve the desired impact.

- **Dissemination, Diffusion, and Scale Up of Family Health Innovations in Low-Income Countries**

  The evidence-based AIDED model can help guide the dissemination, diffusion, and scale-up of family health innovations in low-income countries. This document describes the model, including its five main components that have been linked to successful scale-up, and provides examples of its use.

- **An Organizational Framework for Translation in Public Health: The Knowledge to Action Framework**

  This article describes the Knowledge to Action (K2S) Framework developed by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to help organize the complex process of translating new discoveries into evidence-based programs, policies, and practices. The three phases of the framework ? research, translation, and institutionalization ? all need a variety of supporting structures and a strong component of evaluation to succeed.

- **Evidence-Based Public Health: A Fundamental Concept for Public Health Practice**

  Over the past decade, the concept of evidence-based public health has gained much support. This abstract describes a journal article (access to full text available for a fee) that reviews the components of evidence-based health and the types of evidence that are available for use. Analytic tools such as systemic reviews and economic evaluation are fundamental to the evidence base of public health policies and practices.

- **Fostering Implementation of Health Services Research Findings into Practice: A Consolidated Framework for Advancing Implementation Science**

  The authors of this journal article propose a consolidated framework for implementation science to promote the development of implementation theories and to help verify what
components of the theories work in particular contexts. The framework is composed of five major domains and eight constructs that are important for research utilization. The article also contains links to supplementary material, including a visual of the framework that you can refer to as you read the rest of the article.

- **A Practical, Robust Implementation and Sustainability Model (PRISM) for Integrating Research Findings into Practice**

This abstract is for a journal article (full text available for a fee) presenting a new model that researchers and health care decision-makers can use to anticipate what will be needed for an intervention that has been tested in a clinical trial to be implemented in a non-research setting. The article includes clear information in a table format and a useful checklist for enhancing research utilization.

- **Pursuing Common Agendas: A Collaborative Model for Knowledge Translation between Research and Practice in Clinical Settings**

This abstract is for a journal article (full text available for a fee) that discusses the benefits of a collaborative relationship between researchers and practitioners. It also proposes an interactive rather than vertical model for research utilization.

- **The Role and Theoretical Evolution of Knowledge Translation and Exchange in Public Health**

This journal article identifies and discusses some of the theories, frameworks, and models that have been developed to support the translation of research into policies and practice. The article also highlights several research studies that have investigated the implications of research utilization on public health. The authors suggest that partnerships between researchers, policy-makers, and the general public will be instrumental in reaching the best health outcomes from research utilization.

- **Turning Research into Practice: Suggested Actions from Case-Studies of Sexual and Reproductive Health**
Research

This link takes you to a report of two technical consultations that the World Health Organization convened in 2003 and 2004 on the topic of research utilization. The report is divided into two main sections: one on concepts and pathways of research utilization and one on case studies. The book is intended to help readers increase the utilization of research and monitor the extent to which evidence is used to improve sexual and reproductive health.

A Guide to Knowledge Translation Theory

This journal article provides an overview of selected theoretical perspectives that can be used to develop interventions to promote research utilization. It also compares and contrasts the different theoretical perspectives and discusses additional perspectives that could be considered.

Assessing Country-Level Efforts to Link Research to Action

This journal article describes several models for linking research to action and then proposes a new framework for assessing country-level efforts to do this. The framework assesses four elements: the general climate for research to action, the production of research, activities that are used to link research to action, and approaches for evaluating change. The framework is also provided in a table format that includes many examples of its four main elements.

Knowledge Translation in Developing Countries

A strong evidence base is lacking for the effectiveness of knowledge translation strategies in developing countries. Studies that have been done suggest that the Ottawa Model for Research Use (OMRU)?with its emphasis on tailoring a given strategy to the opportunities and demands of a local setting?is a useful guide. This journal article describes the principles behind OMRU and recommendations for using the model to overcome challenges to research utilization.

Intervention Complexity?A Conceptual Framework to Inform Priority-Setting in Health
This journal article describes a framework that program managers and policy-makers can use to help decide whether to expand an existing intervention or introduce a new intervention. Based on the concept that every intervention requires a different degree of effort and resources for implementation, the framework shows users how to examine the technical complexity of an intervention to assess the feasibility of replicating it. Article available for free on the PubMed summary page or WHO Bulletin.

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Knowledge Translation: Basic Theories, Approaches and Applications

This document presents an overview of recent approaches to increase the linkages between the research process and the decision-making process. It examines basic theories and applications of research utilization, with a particular emphasis on the health sector. It also includes summaries of other high-quality literature on the topic of research utilization.

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Pathways to "Evidence-Informed" Policy and Practice: A Framework for Action

A key challenge in public health is to better contextualize evidence for more effective policy-making and practice. Theory on the translation of research findings into policy and practice offers only part of the solution to this complex task. The policy-making context is highly political and rapidly changing, and it depends on a variety of factors, inputs, and relationships. In this short journal article, the authors propose that an "evidence-informed policy and practice pathway" can help both researchers and policy actors navigate the use of evidence. The pathway illustrates different types of evidence and their uses in health policy-making. It also proposes that specific capacities (e.g., an individual's skills, experience, and participation in networks) influence the adoption and adaptation of evidence in practice.

•

The Paths from Research to Improved Health Outcomes

This journal article examines a seven-stage model for incorporating evidence into clinical practice. The first large hurdle is for clinicians to be aware of the highest-quality evidence on a given topic, but many other steps are needed before patients can be expected to adhere to an evidence-based practice. The article describes each step, how they can be improved, and methods for addresses challenges at each stage.
A Framework for the Dissemination and Utilization of Research in Health-Care Policy and Practice

This abstract is for a journal article (full text available for a fee) discussing a comprehensive framework of research dissemination and utilization that is useful for both health policy and clinical decision-making. A visual of the framework can be found at the end of the article after the references.

- **Strengthening HIV Prevention: Application of a Research-to-Practice Framework**

This abstract is for a journal article (full text available for a fee) that considers the challenges of implementing HIV prevention strategies and proposes a framework to facilitate research utilization within the complex and dynamic HIV prevention field.

### Barriers & Challenges

A fair amount of research has been conducted on the barriers and challenges associated with research utilization. In a 2002 systematic review of 24 studies on how evidence and information influence health-focused decision-makers, the absence of personal contact between researchers and policy-makers and the lack of timeliness or relevance of research were the most common constraints. Interestingly, an updated systematic review conducted in 2014 that included 145 new studies and examined other policy areas in addition to health, found the same major barriers and facilitators.

When pilot projects are being tested, common barriers to the utilization of the results are often
categorized according to the characteristics of the intervention, the study design, and the larger context in which the research is being applied. The following resources provide more information about barriers and challenges to research utilization and how to address them.

Resources:

- **A systematic review of barriers to and facilitators of the use of evidence by policymakers**

  This 2014 article updates and expands the 2002 systematic review conducted by Invaer et al. 145 new studies were identified, of which over half were published after 2010. Compared with the original review, a much wider range of policy topics was found. The most frequently reported barriers to evidence uptake were poor access to good quality relevant research, and lack of timely research output. The most frequently reported facilitators were collaboration between researchers and policymakers, and improved relationships and skills. Although investigations into the use of evidence have spread beyond the health field and into more countries, the main barriers and facilitators remained the same as in the earlier review.

- **Integrating Research, Practice, and Policy: What We See Depends on Where We Stand**

  This abstract is for a special issue of the *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice* (full text available for a fee) that characterizes the current field of research utilization. In doing so, it discusses several important barriers to research utilization, including confusion of terminology and misunderstandings about the meaning of evidence. The issue is intended to help diverse public health professionals identify their roles in helping to close the research-to-practice gap.

- **How Can We Increase Translation of Research into Practice? Types of Evidence Needed**
This review article summarizes key factors that have interfered with the translation of research into practice and explores what public health researchers can do to facilitate such translation. Included in the review is a visual image explaining four main categories of barriers to translation, a discussion on the importance of having a range of types of evidence, and tables outlining how and when the different types of evidence may be helpful. Article is available for free through PubMed summary page.

- **Using Research to Inform Health Policy: Barriers and Strategies in Developing Countries**

  Increased collaboration among researchers and policy-makers is one of the key strategies to increase the uptake of research in health policy and program development. This journal article provides a good summary of barriers facing both researchers and policy-makers and strategies for overcoming them. The link provided is to the working paper on which the article is based and is publicly available.

- **Bridging the Implementation Gap between Knowledge and Practice for Health**

  This journal article from a special themed issue of the *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* focuses on implementing evidence in clinical practice. Included is a discussion of barriers to implementation and how some challenges that are perceived as barriers can actually be used to promote change.

- **Evidence-Based Reproductive Health Care: Getting Evidence into Practice**

  Delays in both compiling research findings and in addressing barriers to change slow down the adoption of research findings into clinical practice. This journal article discusses challenges to incorporating good evidence into practice, ways to identify solid evidence, and multiple strategies for improving clinical practice.

Online communities, forums, listserves
Online communities, forums, listserves, blogs, etc relevant to research utilization:

- **The Knowledge Brokers? Forum (KBF)** is a collaborative space to promote knowledge sharing and dissemination on knowledge brokering (KB) and the role of intermediaries in international development. Their aim is to foster a global community of peers interested in KB from a diversity of sectors and practices, consolidate information and resources on intermediaries and help promote experiences and refine practices in knowledge brokering and knowledge translation (KT). It includes blogs and e-discussions in addition to other useful KB-related resources.

- **Evidence-based Policy in Development Network** aims to establish a worldwide community of practice for think tanks, policy research institutes and similar organizations working in international development, to promote more evidence-based, pro-poor development policies. Specifically, this website is designed as a community website which provides: knowledge on bridging research and policy; details of members of the network; a directory of training and advisory expertise; discussion forums; project areas; and a partnership brokering area.

- **Africa Evidence Network** is a community of people who work in Africa and have an interest in evidence, its production (in particular but not exclusively through systematic reviews) and use in decision-making. We include researchers, practitioners and policy-makers from universities, NGOs and governments. Joining the network is free and offers access to newsletters, event information and networking opportunities.

- A [blog](#) by the head of DFID?s Evidence into Action team, Kirsty Newman. Described as ?Musings on research, international development, and other stuff?, Kirsty posts very short but very compelling thought pieces on the state of evidence-based development.

- **Healthcare Information for All (HIFA)** is a campaign and knowledge network with more than 7,000 members representing 2,500 organizations in 171 countries worldwide. Members include health workers, publishers, librarians, information technologists, researchers, social scientists, journalists, policy-makers and others ? all working together towards the HIFA Vision: a world where every person and every health worker has access to the healthcare information they need to protect their own health and the health of those for whom they are
Practical Strategies

The true test of research is whether people use it. (2)

Much of the literature that examines barriers and challenges to research utilization also offers strategies for increasing the likelihood that research results will be incorporated into programs, policies, and practice. This section of the toolkit focuses on several of the most common research utilization strategies: collaborative research, stakeholder engagement, champions, knowledge brokers, advocacy, and communication.

Although these strategies are recognized by academics and practitioners, some have been tested more rigorously than others. One reason for limited evidence is that teasing out which in a handful of strategies is responsible for gains in research utilization is difficult. That said, a recent document by FHI 360 clearly summarizes the evidence in support of eight strategies for moving research into practice.

Different strategies are appropriate for different contexts, some of the strategies are used during more than one phase of the research process, and multiple strategies are usually necessary for successful research utilization.

Potential linkages and overlap between the different strategies will be evident as you explore this section of the toolkit, which includes the key literature that is available on the effectiveness of the strategies. Also included in this section of the toolkit are case studies of how particular strategies have been applied in diverse settings. More tailored guidance and practical tools for applying the strategies in your own work can be found in the tabs on Guidance & Tools for Researchers and Guidance & Tools for Programs and Policy-Makers.
Stakeholder Engagement & Collaborative Research

Champions

Knowledge Brokers

Advocacy & Communication

Stakeholder Engagement & Collaborative Research

Collaborative research and stakeholder engagement are two closely linked strategies for research utilization. Regardless of the technique that is used, establishing and maintaining relationships with stakeholders has been proven to be an important element for facilitating the translation of research into programs, policies, and practice.

Stakeholder engagement is the process of ensuring that the appropriate people are identified and involved throughout the research process so that they are in a position to inform study design and then make use of the results when a study is completed. The degree and type of stakeholder engagement may vary, depending on the type of research being conducted or the phase of research.

The appropriate people for any given study may include those with decision-making power such as parliamentarians, ministry of health officials, and funders. Program implementers, health service providers, clients, and community members are other common stakeholders. Another
Collaborative research happens as you move along the continuum toward more intensive stakeholder engagement, when policy-makers, program managers, service-delivery staff, community members, and other beneficiaries of research all have substantial input into the research process.

During collaborative research, different groups of end-users can help identify a research question, develop a methodology, implement a study, interpret, share, or apply study results. The collaboration can also involve end-users more extensively, such as when a research steering committee includes end-users, when end-users become co-principal investigators of a study, or when communication channels between researchers and end-users become institutionalized (such as communities of practice).

The resources below include general information on collaborative research and stakeholder engagement, as well as case studies of the successful use of these strategies. Tools to help you identify and engage stakeholders in the research process can be found in subsections on study design and partnerships and collaboration in the Guidance & Tools for Researchers tab. They can also be found in subsections on involvement in research and identifying and understanding evidence in the Guidance & Tools for Programs and Policy-Makers tab.

Developing research projects in collaboration with national stakeholders to address their expressed needs and problems was probably the most critical determinant for ensuring that the results would be used. (5)

Resources:

- Why Strengthening the Linkages between Research and Practice is Important: Learning from Young Lives
This policy brief from the Young Lives research project summarizes the challenges and opportunities for translating research into policy and practice in the area of child poverty and child protection. The brief is the product of two consultations held in Ethiopia and India at which mixed groups of stakeholders identified several barriers including lack of interaction between stakeholder groups, problems with who sets research agendas, lack of resources for supporting research uptake, and researchers’ lack of awareness of policy contexts. In Ethiopia, the exercise led to the creation of a Child Research and Practice Forum (CRPF), which now meets regularly to share current research and learning, build local capacity for using and engaging with research, and to shape future research agendas.

• Bridging the Gaps between Research, Policy and Practice in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: A Survey of Researchers

In a survey of more than 300 scientists involved in research related to the Millennium Development Goals, only 43% of the scientists established or maintained long-term partnerships with representatives of the health care providers who were likely to have an interest in their results. This abstract summarizes a journal article (full text available for a fee) that considers what must change for that percentage to increase.

• Pursuing Common Agendas: A Collaborative Model for Knowledge Translation between Research and Practice in Clinical Settings

This abstract is for a journal article (full text available for a fee) that discusses the benefits of a collaborative relationship between researchers and practitioners. It also proposes an interactive rather than vertical model for research utilization.

• Stakeholder Engagement Opportunities in Systematic Reviews: Knowledge Transfer for Policy and Practice

This abstract is for a journal article (full text available for a fee) describing how to involve stakeholders in reviews of research literature, which helps increase the utilization of knowledge among the stakeholders.
Revisiting Interaction in Knowledge Translation

The involvement of stakeholders in research yields varying degrees of success in the transition of results to practice. This journal article considers four conditions that have an effect on the outcome.

• Turning Research into Practice: Suggested Actions from Case-Studies of Sexual and Reproductive Health Research

This link takes you to a report of two technical consultations that the World Health Organization convened in 2003 and 2004 on the topic of research utilization. The report is divided into two main sections: one on concepts and pathways of research utilization and one on case studies. The book is intended to help readers increase the utilization of research and monitor the extent to which evidence is used to improve sexual and reproductive health.

• A Guide to Researcher and Knowledge-User Collaboration in Health Research

This is an online tutorial with modules on such topics as identifying partners, taking stock of barriers and facilitators, and working collaboratively to design a study.

• A Handbook on Knowledge Sharing: Strategies and Recommendations for Researchers, Policymakers, and Service Providers

?Integrated Knowledge Sharing: Research Collaborations and Communities of Practice? is the third chapter in this handbook about sharing knowledge. The chapter explains how to create sustainable partnerships with stakeholders by building communities for sharing knowledge.

• Community of Practice Design Guide: A Step-by-Step Guide for Creating Collaborative Communities of Practice
This short document includes tips for groups in disparate domains to work together to achieve complementary goals.

- **Integrating Family Planning and Voluntary Counseling and Testing Services in Kenya**

  This brief describes how the government of Kenya used research demonstrating the feasibility of integrating family planning into voluntary counseling and testing (VCT) centers to develop and begin implementing a strategy for providing family planning services at all VCT centers in the country. Government leadership, an effective task force, and stakeholder commitment have been key to translating this important research into improved family planning and VCT services for Kenyan clients.

- **Partnership Experiences: Involving Decision-Makers in the Research Process**

  This abstract is for a journal article (full text available for a fee) that describes three models for involving decision-makers in research and circumstances that influence a decision-maker’s degree of participation.

- **Communities of Practice: A Strategy for Sharing and Building Knowledge**

  A community of practice (COP) can be defined as a group of people who share a concern or passion about a particular topic and who interact on a regular basis to improve their knowledge about the topic. In addition to sharing knowledge, COPs offer a mechanism for collaborative research by bringing together researchers and end-users of research. This FOCUS technical brief discusses the characteristics and benefits of COPs and presents the experience of the National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research in supporting a community of practice for its own grantees.

Champions
One approach to effectively advocate for the use of particular research results is the engagement of champions. The term "champion" generally refers to a charismatic, influential, or respected individual who visibly and vocally supports evidence and promotes its application among his or her peers. A champion can be a policy-maker, health professional, local leader, or member of the target population. Although champions can have varying degrees of influence, they are most often recognized as effective opinion leaders by their peers. According to a Cochrane review from 2011, using champions to create change has been proven as effective and been applied in a range of public health areas. Much of the available literature focuses on the use of "clinical" champions (i.e., physicians) in developed countries. However, a growing body of literature highlights a broader use of the strategy, including use within developing countries and via nonclinical professionals (i.e., Ministry of Health officials or program managers). The resources below provide evidence on the effectiveness of using champions as a research utilization strategy. Also included are methods for identifying local opinion leaders and case studies on the successful use of champions in many parts of the world.

Resources:

- **Engaging Innovative Advocates as Public Health Champions**

  This brief describes FHI 360's "Network of Champions" initiative in eight sub-Saharan and South Asian countries.

- **Local Opinion Leaders: Effects on Professional Practice and Health Care Outcomes**
This brief summarizes a Cochrane review of 12 case studies showing that opinion leaders influence the extent to which health care professionals use research findings in their practice. The full text of the Cochrane review can also be accessed here.

- **Identifying Opinion Leaders to Promote Behavior Change**

  This abstract describes a journal article (full text available for a fee) that synthesizes nearly 200 studies and yields 10 methods for selecting opinion leaders. In the article, the authors describe the pros and cons of each method and discuss factors that might lead a program to choose one method over another.

- **The Community Popular Opinion Leader HIV Prevention Programme: Conceptual Basis and Intervention Procedures**

  This journal article describes how popular community opinion leaders were identified and trained to carry HIV prevention messages to their peers at study sites in China, India, Peru, Russia, and Zimbabwe. (See also article in this section entitled *Development of an Opinion Leader-Led HIV Prevention Intervention among Alcohol Users in Chennai, India*).

- **From Roadblock to Champion: PHE Advocacy and Local Government Executives**

  In this case study, PATH Foundation Philippines Inc. was able to win the support of a mayor who had previously objected to condom distribution in the municipality. This support was hugely important to the innovative project that incorporated family planning and reproductive health in coastal resource management.

- **Development of an Opinion Leader-Led HIV Prevention Intervention among Alcohol Users in Chennai, India**
This abstract is for a journal article (full text available for a fee) documenting the effectiveness of popular community opinion leaders in an intervention to communicate HIV prevention messages to wine shop patrons in India.

Knowledge Brokers

According to the literature on research utilization, researchers and end-users of the research—mainly policy-makers, program managers, service providers, and clients—are often disconnected. As a result, many end-users are unable to benefit fully from research results. To address this problem, some organizations have employed a strategy known as knowledge brokering.

A knowledge broker’s explicit role is to establish relationships between researchers and end-users, providing the end-users with research results in formats that are easy to understand. Although knowledge brokering can be viewed as a subcategory of stakeholder engagement or champions, it is unique in that it focuses on the dedicated role of connecting researchers and non-researchers. Below are several resources that further explore this particular research utilization strategy.

Resources:

- How can knowledge brokering be advanced in a country’s health system

This policy brief from the BRIDGE Project focuses on what to do next to advance knowledge brokering within a health system. Although focused on European health systems, the four sets of interrelated issues that it identifies and addresses are also relevant for developing country contexts. These include: 1) the untapped potential for health systems
information to inform policy-making; 2) missed opportunities to take stock and prioritize advancements in knowledge brokering; 3) lack of alignment of support for knowledge brokering; and 4) limited reach of existing efforts to advance knowledge brokering. The authors profile three options for addressing the above issues, including: establishing a portal for knowledge-brokering mechanisms; convening a dialogue to coordinate advancements in knowledge brokering; and centralizing knowledge-brokering mechanisms in a well-designed organization. Each option includes results of relevant systematic reviews.

- **Why your knowledge-sharing portal will probably not save the world**

  This post from the KirstyEvidence blog (the personal blog of Kirsty Newman, Head of the Evidence into Action team at DFID) cautions against thinking that a knowledge-sharing portal is the best strategy for supporting evidence-informed policy. While she recognizes that these portals and knowledge sharing communities can be quite successful, she also asks the reader to consider a few questions prior to embarking: Is lack of a portal the problem? Is someone else doing it already? Can it be hosted on Facebook? Whose one-stop shop is it?

- **A Description of a Knowledge Broker Role Implemented as Part of a Randomized Controlled Trial Evaluating Three Knowledge Translation Strategies**

  This journal article describes the experience of a Canadian study involving a knowledge broker. It also highlights the lessons learned from the experience.

- **Achieving Buy-In: Building Networks to Facilitate Knowledge Transfer**

  This brief summarizes the use in Toronto of a network of knowledge brokers to present ergonomic health and safety recommendations in workplace settings.

- **FOCUS on Knowledge Brokering**

  This issue of the Australian government’s periodical *FOCUS on* . . . provides a broad overview of knowledge brokering. The evidence indicates that knowledge brokering forges
closer links between the research sector and government, industry, and the community.

- **Using Knowledge Brokering to Promote Evidence-Based Policy Making: The Need for Support Structures**

  This journal article considers how the institutionalization of knowledge brokering contributes to a stronger culture of evidence-based policies and of research that is relevant to policies. It is available for free through a link on the summary page.

- **The Theory and Practice of Knowledge Brokering in Canada’s Health System**

  This report includes the definition of knowledge brokering, a list of skills that knowledge brokers often possess, and a description of their common tasks. It also discusses the types of demonstration projects that need to be conducted to determine the most effective approaches to knowledge brokering. The report is based on seven national consultations on knowledge brokering, held by Canada’s Health Services Research Foundation in 2002, and on a literature review on the same topic.

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**Advocacy & Communication**
Research results and evidence-based practices must be communicated and promoted to various stakeholders in order for them to be applied to policy and practice. Researchers can engage key stakeholders to identify priorities for advocacy, including what policy or practice outcomes of a research study are desired. Policymakers and program managers can promote evidence-based practices to their peers.

Advocacy and communication campaigns can employ champions, community mobilization, media, or combinations of these and other tactics. The advocacy strategies and the communication channels should be tailored to each specific type of end-user.

The resources below provide advice on designing and managing advocacy and communications strategies to maximize the use of research results by different audiences. Most of the resources are related to advocacy and communications for policy change, although strategies for changing service-delivery practices and documents on disseminating research in general are also included.

The Guidance & Tools for Researchers tab of this toolkit contains additional background and practical tools on the dissemination of research findings and on advocacy for change. The Guidance & Tools for Programs and Policy-Makers tab also contains a subsection on evidence-based decision-making.

Resources:

- Evidence Summaries Tailored to Health Policy-Makers in Low- and Middle-Income Countries

This journal article offers a field-tested format for presenting public health findings to policymakers. Findings from a six-country study found that when presenting evidence from systematic reviews, policy-makers prefer short summaries with key messages up front. The summaries should be clear and easy to read, and they should explain how the findings are relevant for policy decisions.
Getting Research into Policy and Practice: Experiences from Sexual and Reproductive Health, HIV and AIDS

This research utilization-themed issue of the Health Insights newsletter discusses advocacy for sexual and reproductive health policies and practices in Malawi, Zambia, South Africa, Ghana, Tanzania, and Bangladesh. Several short, clear case studies are presented.

How Can We Support the Use of Systematic Reviews in Policymaking?

This journal article proposes the best ways evidence can be synthesized and packaged to optimize its use by health policy-makers and their stakeholders. Discussions on the types of systematic reviews that can be helpful at different stages of the policy-making process and suggestions of products that can be made using information from systematic reviews are included.

Understanding the Research to Policy Process in Zambia: The Case of Cotrimoxazole Preventative Therapy (Working Paper, Issue 2)

Although the World Health Organization has recommended cotrimoxazole prophylaxis to prevent HIV in adults and children since 2000, Zambia did not make the drug an active part of its HIV prevention program until 2007. This case study considers the reasons for the delay through the lens of effective advocacy for research utilization. It also identifies three important factors in policy change and provides three strategies for facilitating the uptake of evidence.

Making Research Findings Actionable: A Quick Reference to Communicating Health Information for
**Decision-Making**

Researchers provide health information to empower stakeholders in making evidence-based decisions. However, research is frequently unavailable, inaccessible, irrelevant, or simply not useful—greatly limiting its power to improve a health system. An information dissemination strategy can increase the uptake of research information by stakeholders. A strategy should be considered when the research is being planned. The strategy should address the communication objectives, the target audiences, and the appropriate channels. This document suggests various approaches to help stakeholders make informed decisions about health policies.

- **Factors Influencing the Utilization of Research Findings by Health Policy Makers in a Developing Country: The Selection of Mali’s Essential Medicines**

  This brief presents the government of Mali’s process for updating its essential drugs list as an example of the factors that encourage and hinder the willingness and ability of policymakers to use research findings.

- **Researchers and Policymakers: Travelers in Parallel Universes**

  This journal article discusses reasons for the lack of consistent and systematic translation of scientific research into public policy, ways to increase the productivity and relevance of interactions between researchers and policy-makers, and related topics. Several tables and graphics are included in the article to help outline the motivations and decision-making processes of researchers versus policy-makers.

- **Health Policy-Makers' Perceptions of Their Use of Evidence: A Systematic Review**
This abstract is for a journal article (full text available for a fee) that reviews interviews with health policy-makers. The article suggests that two-way personal communication—the most common suggestion for improving the use of research for policy decisions—might indeed improve the appropriate use of research evidence. However, it might also promote selective (i.e., inappropriate) use of research evidence.

**Public Education and Advocacy against Unsafe Abortion: A Case Study of Nepal**

This PowerPoint presentation from the workshop “Moving Beyond Research to Inform Policy: Barriers and Strategies in Developing Countries” is a case study of an advocacy campaign that was launched in 1998 to address the public health burden of illegal abortions and pave the way to the legalization of abortion in Nepal.

**Scale-Up**

Scale-up can be defined and interpreted in a variety of ways. In the context of this toolkit, it refers to the expansion or institutionalization of proven interventions in order to maximize their health impact. An example is when an intervention is successfully piloted in one clinic in one in district, and then is eventually implemented in every clinic in that district. For successfully tested interventions, scale-up is the pinnacle of the research utilization process.

Successful scale-up, which is rarely a linear process, can be difficult to achieve. Although there is no set of scale-up strategies that will work in all situations, successful scale-up often relies on
strategies that are similar to those used to facilitate other types of research utilization. For example, scale-up can be facilitated by engaging stakeholders early in the research process, maintaining strong communication between researchers and decision-makers, ensuring the relevance of an intervention, and collecting information on process (e.g., data on the costs and benefits of the intervention, detailed descriptions of how the intervention should be implemented) to help practitioners make decisions about whether and how to implement the intervention in their settings.

Scale-up also requires strategic planning and the management of change. This can happen at the individual level (e.g., use of a provider job aid), within an organization or site (e.g., supportive supervision), and within a health system (e.g., measurement of compliance with a new protocol). Strong communication among researchers and implementers can greatly facilitate this process.

A growing body of literature, including the resources below, identifies some promising techniques for planning and supporting the scale-up of proven health interventions in a variety of contexts. More tailored information for different audiences can be found in the study design and supporting scale-up subsections of the Guidance & Tools for Researchers tab and in the scaling-up evidence-based practices subsection of the Guidance & Tools for Programs and Policy-Makers tab of the toolkit.

For a given health concern, there is no single package of interventions and set of scaling-up strategies that are likely to work in all situations. Expecting to discover innovations that are easily replicated and readily disseminated is unrealistic. Most health service innovations are complex, and the strategies to introduce them must be multifaceted and adapted to the specific context. (3)

Resources:

- **Guide for Monitoring Scale-up of Health Practices and Interventions**

  This guide is intended to provide governments, donors, country organizations, and implementing partners with a low cost and replicable approach to monitoring the process of scaling up innovations in health. The goal is to assist country stakeholders with identifying if scale-up is happening as intended; where, if necessary, there need to be mid-course corrections; and if the practice can be sustained to achieve the desired impact.
Scaling Up--From Vision to Large Scale Change: Tools and Techniques for Practitioners

This resource is a companion document to the MSI Scaling-up Management Framework (also available in this section of the Research Utilization Toolkit). This Toolkit includes 15 tools for use with selected tasks outlined in the Framework. The materials in this document were developed, refined, and applied over a nine year period in 22 projects in India, Mexico, and Nigeria. It integrates several case studies, mostly drawn from the health sector, to demonstrate how the tools are used. The Toolkit is designed as a practical resource for field practitioners.

- The Policy Dimensions of Scaling Up Health Initiatives

In this Working Paper, the Health Policy Project (HPP) reviewed the literature on scale-up, interviewed key experts involved in scaling up initiatives, and hosted a meeting on relevant policy and gender issues. It defines “scale-up?” and describes some of the frameworks and approaches to scale-up found in recent health literature with a particular focus on how such approaches address policy. It also reviews the experience of selected organizations in scaling up best practices and how they have addressed policy issues. It identifies a number of lessons learned from scale-up initiatives and lists six recommendations for ensuring supportive policies to strengthen scale-up.

- Scaling Up?From Vision to Large-Scale Change: A Management Framework for Practitioners

The concept of scale-up has received increasing attention as donors have recognized with concern the relatively poor record of innovative pilot projects extending their reach to large populations. This 61-page resource seeks to improve this track record through practical advice on a three-step, ten task process for effective scaling up. The framework is not specific to a particular sector. This is the Second Edition of this document and now includes a companion Scale-up Toolkit (also available in this section of the Research Utilization Toolkit).

- Dissemination, Diffusion, and Scale Up of Family Health Innovations in Low-Income Countries
The evidence-based AIDED model can help guide the dissemination, diffusion, and scale-up of family health innovations in low-income countries. This document describes the model, including its five main components that have been linked to successful scale-up, and provides examples of its use.

Do We Have the Right Models for Scaling Up Health Services to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals?

Many global health initiatives have taken the same scale-up strategies and used them in very different countries, which has not helped many of the countries reach their Millennium Development Goals. This systematic literature review identifies and describes six different conceptual models for scaling up health services in developing countries. The authors conclude that models that encourage "learning by doing" may be more effective than some of the current approaches.

Understanding Pathways for Scaling Up Health Services through the Lens of Complex Adaptive Systems

Efforts to scale-up health services in developing countries are not meeting the Millennium Development Goals, so the authors of this article propose a new way of thinking about scale-up. They recommend that the field of public health start to interpret change in health systems through the lens of complex adaptive systems, which have been studied successfully in other fields. This journal article discusses how these systems work and how they may be able to improve future efforts to scale-up health services.

Scaling-up Community Provision of Injectables through the Public Sector in Uganda

This case study offers a detailed chronicle of the activities and challenges involved in expanding a system in which community health workers distribute injectable contraceptives to
the community. Expansion followed a successful pilot study of the system in Uganda.

• **Scaling Up in International Health: What Are the Key Issues?**

This journal article discusses four topics related to the scale-up of a public health intervention: the costs of scaling up coverage, constraints to scaling up, equity and quality concerns, and service-delivery issues. A commentary printed in response to the article, which takes the discussion even further, can be accessed here.

• **How Much Will It Cost to Scale Up a Reproductive Health Pilot Project?**

This brief explains how to adapt and modify cost information obtained from a pilot project to estimate scale-up costs. It is designed to help managers think critically about the factors that must be considered in estimating the costs of scaling up an effective intervention.

• **A Guide for Fostering Change to Scale Up Effective Health Services**

A task team of the Implementing Best Practices Consortium (a group of donors, providers, and technical assistance partners from developed and developing countries) have identified effective management of change as the crucial step for successful scale-up of health services. This 46-page guide explains how to manage change and offers tools to support the effort. A Global Health e-Learning course is also available on ?Fostering Change in Health Services.? You will have to register with an email address and password to access this free course.
Ten Dimensions of Scaling Up Reproductive Health Programs

This series of briefs discusses 10 important dimensions for scale-up: change, capacity, strategy, impact, sustainability, access, supply and demand, cost, resources, and timing of the scale-up. Although written for program managers, the practical questions posed in the briefs are also relevant for researchers who want to play a role in the scale-up of their research results.

Facilitating Large Scale Transitions to Quality of Care in Family Planning Programs: An Idea Whose Time Has Come

This journal article draws from research in the social sciences and from case studies to discuss the requirements for successful scale-up.

ExpandNet

ExpandNet is a global network of public health professionals dedicated to improving the science and practice of scale-up. Its website is an excellent source of materials and tools for the scale-up of health interventions in developing countries. Many of its articles and tools, as well as an extensive bibliography of literature on the science of scaling-up, are also featured in the ExpandNet/WHO Toolkit for Scaling Up Health Innovations.

Guidance & Tools for Researchers
"To him who devotes his life to science, nothing can give more happiness than increasing
the number of discoveries, but his cup of joy is full when the results of his studies find
practical applications." --Louis Pasteur

The guidance documents and practical tools in this section of

the toolkit can help researchers anticipate and respond to a variety of research utilization
considerations during the research process. This includes aspects of study design, ways to
strengthen partnerships and collaboration, and how to plan for future research utilization while
your study is being implemented. It also includes how to disseminate research findings so that,
when appropriate, they can be used to advocate for changes in programs, policies, and practice.
Guidance and tools to help support eventual scale-up of tested interventions (if results are
positive) and information on how to measure the impact of these efforts are also included.

Because these topics often overlap, some resources in this tab of the toolkit may be featured in
more than one subsection. You can also review the Practical Strategies tab of the toolkit for more
general articles and case studies on specific research utilization strategies you can use to
increase the chances that the results of your research will be utilized.

Overview

Study Design

Partnerships & Collaboration

Study Implementation

Dissemination

Advocacy for Change
Supporting Scale-Up

Research on Research Utilization

Guidance & Tools for Researchers Overview

These guidance documents and tools can help researchers navigate the overall research utilization process. Written specifically with researchers in mind, they provide an overview of the main issues you might face before, during, and after your research study.

Developing research projects in collaboration with national stakeholders to address their expressed needs and problems was probably the most critical determinant for ensuring that the results would be used. (5)

Resources:

• Knowledge Translation in Low & Middle-Income Countries

This module, one of a series commissioned by the Knowledge Translation and Public Outreach Branch of the Canadian Coalition for Global Health Research, orients researchers to research utilization activities in low- and middle-income countries and the organizations that support this work. The module also presents five case studies.
Knowledge Translation: A Research Matters Toolkit

This 259-page toolkit provides a helpful overview of some of the main issues involved in research utilization. It also offers strategies to help researchers focused on health policy and systems in low- and middle-income countries foster the utilization of their work. Twelve chapters cover such aspects of knowledge translation as strategies for promoting linkage and exchange, steps to devise a knowledge management strategy, political mapping and situational analysis, developing a communications strategy, and making the best use of modern communication technologies.

Turning Research into Practice: Suggested Actions from Case-Studies of Sexual and Reproductive Health Research

This link takes you to a report of two technical consultations that the World Health Organization convened in 2003 and 2004 on the topic of research utilization. The report is divided into two main sections: one on concepts and pathways of research utilization and one on case studies. The book is intended to help readers increase the utilization of research and monitor the extent to which evidence is used to improve sexual and reproductive health.

Maximizing Dissemination: Two Knowledge Translation Planning Tools for Stroke Research Teams

The ?Tool for Biomedical Researchers? and the ?Tool for Clinical, Health Services, and Population/Public Health Researchers? include a series of checklists to help researchers maximize their knowledge translation strategy with respect to knowledge generation, knowledge transfer, and knowledge uptake. The tools should be used at the beginning of a research project, as a workbook to guide the development of a strategy, and throughout the duration of a project. Although they were designed for professionals involved in stroke research, the tools should be applicable to other fields. Although they are free, sign-in is required to access them.

Conceptualizing and Combining Evidence for Health
System Guidance

This document reviews how research-based evidence is treated by the scientists who produce it, those who formulate guidance, and those who make program and policy decisions. It also examines the deliberative process of combining different forms of evidence to produce guidance for health systems.

- Going Beyond Research: A Key Issues Paper Raising Discussion Points Related to Dissemination, Utilisation and Impact of Reproductive and Sexual Health Research

This key issues paper is drawn from the two-day workshop ?Moving Beyond Research to Influence Policy,? held at the University of Southampton in January 2001. The paper considers research utilization from the perspectives of decision-makers, researchers, and donors. It also explores the relationships among these three groups.

- Issues in Linkage and Exchange between Researchers and Decision Makers

This 31-page document summarizes the proceedings of a workshop that brought together more than 100 researchers, research funders, and decision-makers from across Canada to review and discuss the challenge of research dissemination and uptake. The workshop participants identified concrete actions to promote linkage and exchange among researchers and decision-makers.

- How Do Researchers Influence Decision-Makers? Case Studies of Mexican Policies

This journal article discusses the relationship between health service research and policy in Mexico. Through interviews with researchers and policy-makers, the authors identified factors that helped or hindered exchanges between these two groups. The article also provides recommendations on increasing the impact of health policy-making in Mexico in the areas of family planning, AIDS, immunizations, and cholera.
Making a Difference to Policy and Programs: A Guide for Researchers

This web publication from the Support for Analysis and Research in Africa Project aids researchers who aim to have an impact on policy and program decisions. The first two sections discuss defining the research question and developing the research proposal.

Knowledge Translation Methods and Tools for Public Health

This website provides tools for those who work in public health, such as frontline practitioners, knowledge brokers, health promoters, managers, decision-makers, policy-makers, evaluators, and researchers. The tools should help in the “planning, doing, and evaluating” of different types of knowledge translation activities, including knowledge dissemination, knowledge synthesis, knowledge exchange, and knowledge application.

Study Design
Several guidance documents are available to help researchers maximize the future utilization of their results while they are conceptualizing and designing a study. The resources below provide an overview of some of the issues that are important to address at this point in the research process, such as establishing collaborative partnerships and communication mechanisms with stakeholders, assessing the appropriateness of an intervention, and planning for eventual scale-up. Related guidance for researchers is also available in the subsections on collaborative partnerships and supporting scale-up.

It may seem premature to consider research utilization before research has begun and results are known, but the literature points to several barriers to research utilization that can be addressed at the earliest stages of the research process. Academics and practitioners have used the most common intervention-related barriers to identify specific criteria that can help determine whether an intervention is likely to lead to successful scale-up (see sidebar on CORRECT). Researchers can work to apply these criteria to the interventions they are conceptualizing for their study and, if feasible, alter the interventions to better comply with the criteria.

Many of the common barriers to research utilization can also be addressed by not only informing key stakeholders about the conceptualization and design process but also adequately involving them in this process. By doing so, researchers learn what the most pressing needs are in the eyes of those who will be directly affected by the results, confirm the relevance of the proposed research, and gain insight into potential obstacles to implementing the research. Researchers may also be able to identify champions among the stakeholders who can assist with implementing the research and who will be positioned to help disseminate research results and foster their application.

Resources:

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FHI 360 Research Utilization Planning Tool

Designed by FHI 360, this tool is intended to guide discussions within a research team during the development of a study or project concept to facilitate research utilization. Specifically, the discussions prompted by this guide will help the team to: 1) develop and implement strategies to ensure future utilization or scale up of promising results, and 2) identify concrete research utilization milestones to be inserted into the study/project workplan. These discussions should begin during the concept development phase (prior to protocol development). Ideally, the tool should be revisited by the team during each phase of the study or project.

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Beginning with the End in Mind

This guidance document offers 12 recommendations to help researchers and other stakeholders plan for scale-up at the same time they plan their studies. A checklist is also included to help build these recommendations into the study plans.

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Communications Handbook for Clinical Trials: Strategies, Tips, and Tools to Manage Controversy, Convey Your Message, and Disseminate Results

The development of communications strategies and budgeting for communications about your research should start early in the research process. Strategic communication is key to effective advocacy, which in turn is part of the foundation of successful research utilization. This handbook explains how to manage communications from the beginning to the end of a research project. Chapter 2 focuses on preparing and budgeting for communications, and chapter 3 focuses on developing a strategic communications plan. Both of these chapters may be especially helpful during the design of your study.

•

Turning Research into Practice: Suggested Actions from Case-Studies of Sexual and Reproductive Health Research

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**Partnerships & Collaboration**

Researchers often involve stakeholders in developing a research question or designing a study, but they do not contact the stakeholders
again until after the research results are known. This can leave stakeholders feeling disconnected or undervalued, which can lessen their enthusiasm for the results. Instead, stakeholder engagement should begin when the research question is being developed and should continue throughout the life of a study (see sidebar on Ideas for Building Partnerships).

The resources below offer guidance and tools that can help you identify relevant stakeholders and work with them throughout a study to ensure that your research is meeting local needs. The resources also provide recommendations on establishing long-lasting partnerships and can help you understand the factors that determine how much stakeholders want to participate in research. The Practical Strategies tab of the toolkit includes more general information and case studies related to stakeholder engagement.

Resources:

- **FHI 360 Stakeholder Analysis Tool**

  Designed by FHI 360, this simple tool is intended to help a research team to identify stakeholders both globally and in-country. The objective is to engage stakeholders around a potential research topic as early as concept development and throughout the research process. Early stakeholder involvement can help make studies more relevant to a particular country or region, thereby increasing the likelihood of research utilization or scale up. Also, if the study demonstrates positive results, the stakeholders are better prepared to support utilization of findings and/or scale up of the intervention.

- **Stakeholder Engagement Tool**

  This tool is a matrix and process for identifying stakeholders and their interests and for engaging with the stakeholders effectively.

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chapter 3 focuses on developing a strategic communications plan. Both of these chapters may be especially helpful during the design of your study.

- **Stakeholder Analysis**

  Stakeholder analysis is a qualitative tool for identifying people and groups who have an interest in the process and outcome of an activity or policy?something to gain or lose from it. In the realm of public health, identifying stakeholders in a project and involving them appropriately is an essential research utilization strategy. This web page provides an explanation of the process of stakeholder analysis and links to case studies and tools to apply the process effectively.

- **Pursuing Common Agendas: A Collaborative Model for Knowledge Translation between Research and Practice in Clinical Settings**

  This abstract is for a journal article (full text available for a fee) that discusses the benefits of a collaborative relationship between researchers and practitioners. It also proposes an interactive rather than vertical model for research utilization.

- **Turning Research into Practice: Suggested Actions from Case-Studies of Sexual and Reproductive Health Research**

  This link takes you to a report of two technical consultations that the World Health Organization convened in 2003 and 2004 on the topic of research utilization. The report is divided into two main sections: one on concepts and pathways of research utilization and one on case studies. The book is intended to help readers increase the utilization of research and monitor the extent to which evidence is used to improve sexual and reproductive health.

- **A Guide to Researcher and Knowledge-User Collaboration in Health Research**

  This is an online tutorial with modules on such topics as identifying partners, taking stock of barriers and facilitators, and working collaboratively to design a study.
A Handbook on Knowledge Sharing: Strategies and Recommendations for Researchers, Policymakers, and Service Providers

?Integrated Knowledge Sharing: Research Collaborations and Communities of Practice? is the third chapter in this handbook about sharing knowledge. The chapter explains how to create sustainable partnerships with stakeholders by building communities for sharing knowledge.

• Partnership Experiences: Involving Decision-Makers in the Research Process

This abstract is for a journal article (full text available for a fee) that describes three models for involving decision-makers in research and circumstances that influence a decision-maker?s degree of participation.

• Guidelines for Conducting a Stakeholder Analysis

This document gives policy-makers, managers, and their working groups a process for collecting and analyzing data about key health reform. Although developed for policy-makers and managers, the guidelines can also help researchers conduct stakeholder analysis, and it is especially useful for studies whose results could point to changes in policy.

Study Implementation

Studies often fail to address outcomes important to practitioners, patients, community leaders, or policy makers, such as intervention costs, cost-effectiveness, or other economic outcomes. Economic analyses are essential to make the business case to potential program adopters. (19)
Once a study has been conceptualized and a protocol has been developed, implementation begins. This phase of the research requires a variety of approaches to help increase the likelihood that the results, if positive, will be incorporated into programs, policies, and practice. These approaches include maintaining stakeholder engagement, communicating about your research while it is being conducted, and rigorously documenting how the intervention is being implemented.

Among the aspects of an intervention that should be documented are costs related to its implementation. This information will be particularly important for decision-makers who want to assess whether expanding or scaling up an intervention is feasible and whether the cost of expansion will be worth its potential impact. Researchers can conduct complete cost-benefit analyses, but even simple figures about the cost of implementing the intervention can be used to project scale-up costs and help decision-makers identify priorities when allocating available health funds.

The following resources provide guidance on documenting all aspects of implementation, maintaining stakeholder engagement, communicating during study implementation, and recognizing challenges in replicating or scaling up an intervention (see sidebar Identifying an Intervention’s Core Components).

Resources:

- **FHI 360 INTERVENTION TRACKING TOOL**

FHI 360 developed this tool to help a study team document how an intervention was implemented. By tracking the intervention process, the study team will be able to: pinpoint when and how the intervention differed from the original design; identify activities which are not always included in final research reports; and most importantly, articulate what is needed for scale-up if the pilot is successful. Knowing about all activities that were involved will also
help to estimate the resources required for each and thus estimate the cost of the intervention. All of this information is essential to groups who will be responsible for future expansion and replication of the intervention.

- **Turning Research into Practice: Suggested Actions from Case-Studies of Sexual and Reproductive Health Research**

  This link takes you to a report of two technical consultations that the World Health Organization convened in 2003 and 2004 on the topic of research utilization. The report is divided into two main sections: one on concepts and pathways of research utilization and one on case studies. The book is intended to help readers increase the utilization of research and monitor the extent to which evidence is used to improve sexual and reproductive health.

- **Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature**

  This monograph draws from a broad survey of publications about the implementation of research findings in order to define implementation and discover criteria for measuring its outcomes. The authors distinguish the core components of an intervention practice or program from those that can be adapted to circumstances when an intervention is replicated or scaled up.

- **Making a Difference to Policy and Programs: A Guide for Researchers**

  This web publication from the Support for Analysis and Research in Africa Project aids researchers who aim to have an impact on policy and program decisions. The first two sections discuss defining the research question and developing the research proposal.
Dissemination is an important activity to plan for and carry out once research results are available. However, it is not the end goal of research utilization and is not the only approach that can be deployed to increase the likelihood that research results will be incorporated into policy, programs, or practice. In fact, dissemination is often a first step toward the end goal of research utilization and often leads to advocacy and communication campaigns.

Researchers and stakeholders should develop a dissemination plan early in the research process. Later in the process, they should revisit the plan and refine it to respond to the needs of different end-users of the results. This will likely involve packaging the results in various formats such as research or policy briefs, press releases, personal testimonies, films, and implementation guides.

The resources and tools below provide extensive guidance for developing a dissemination plan and effectively targeting dissemination to the appropriate audiences. Guidance specific to advocacy can be found in the subsection on advocacy for policy change.

The need to develop ways to communicate research findings to end users (be they decision-makers or donors) through channels other than published papers and presentations at conferences has become a pressing priority. (9)

Resources:

- **Communications Handbook for Clinical Trials: Strategies, Tips, and Tools to Manage Controversy, Convey Your Message, and Disseminate Results**

The development of communications strategies and budgeting for communications about your research should start early in the research process. Strategic communication is key to effective advocacy, which in turn is part of the foundation of successful research utilization.
This handbook explains how to manage communications from the beginning to the end of a research project. Chapter 2 focuses on preparing and budgeting for communications, and chapter 3 focuses on developing a strategic communications plan. Both of these chapters may be especially helpful during the design of your study.

- **Reframing the Dissemination Challenge: A Marketing & Distribution Perspective**

  This commentary suggests a for-profit business model of marketing and distribution to bring evidence-based interventions into practice. The article describes the functions of a marketing and distribution system, explains how such a system would enhanced traditional public health dissemination strategies, and offers specific recommendations for building the needed system infrastructure.


  This 259-page toolkit provides a helpful overview of some of the main issues involved in research utilization. It also offers strategies to help researchers focused on health policy and systems in low- and middle-income countries foster the utilization of their work. Twelve chapters cover such aspects of knowledge translation as strategies for promoting linkage and exchange, steps to devise a knowledge management strategy, political mapping and situational analysis, developing a communications strategy, and making the best use of modern communication technologies.

- **Research Dissemination: Actively Bringing the Research and Policy Worlds Together**

  This short article summarizes two models for creating and maintaining connections between researchers and policy-makers. In doing so, it offers helpful tips on designing research dissemination strategies and understanding their implications.

- **Obvious and Not-So-Obvious Strategies to Disseminate**
Research

Dissemination strategies must be audience-specific, and innovative approaches may be necessary to reach some potential users of research results. This article explores the experiences of two organizations that have used this philosophy to ensure that their research results are incorporated into practice. Although the article is not directly related to public health, it may be of use to professionals who are looking for new ways to reach the health field with important messages, especially when resistance to the messages may be a barrier.

• Dissemination Planning Tool

This summary page links to a six-step tool that guides you through the creation of a dissemination plan. The tool uses tables and prompts to help you identify the issues that are relevant to your situation and think about the processes that are needed to disseminate findings so that they will have an impact in practical settings.

• Successful Communication: A Toolkit for Researchers and Civil Society Organisations

Researchers and practitioners can use the tools presented here to improve their communication with policy-makers and other audiences beyond the research community. The 23 tools in the kit cover planning, packaging, targeting, and monitoring communications.

• Developing an Effective Dissemination Plan

This website walks the reader through why dissemination is important (theory and evidence-base), the elements of an effective dissemination plan, and guidance for developing a dissemination strategy.
Going Beyond Research: A Key Issues Paper Raising Discussion Points Related to Dissemination, Utilisation and Impact of Reproductive and Sexual Health Research

This key issues paper is drawn from the two-day workshop “Moving Beyond Research to Influence Policy,” held at the University of Southampton in January 2001. The paper considers research utilization from the perspectives of decision-makers, researchers, and donors. It also explores the relationships among these three groups.

• Making a Difference to Policy and Programs: A Guide for Researchers

This web publication from the Support for Analysis and Research in Africa Project aids researchers who aim to have an impact on policy and program decisions. The first two sections discuss defining the research question and developing the research proposal.

Advocacy for Policy Change

One of the most common intended outcomes of research utilization is a change in policy. Thus, policy-makers and other individuals and institutions who influence policy-making and other decision-making processes are important target audiences for
dissemination activities.

The literature on research utilization suggests that the priorities and needs of researchers and policy-makers are not always aligned. For example, researchers often prefer to present very detailed explanations and interpretations of their research results rather than short summaries. Policy-makers, on the other hand, usually work under tight deadlines and prefer concise documents that highlight key recommendations for action. As one blogger aptly notes, “scientists blame politicians for failures when science meets policy-making, when in truth the science community needs to do much more to engage productively with the people who actually make policy.”

Researchers need to be aware of how their research results can be used for advocacy purposes, and if possible they should be available to work with others (such as knowledge brokers) to translate their research results into formats that are useful for policy discussions. Disseminating and advocating for underutilized research results (i.e., evidence that already exist but has not been widely used) may require different techniques than advocating for utilization of new research results.

The resources below can help researchers understand the specific needs and desires of policy-makers. They also offer suggestions and strategies for how you can translate your findings into user-friendly formats for policy-makers.

...Despite reluctance of some scientists to be involved in policy development, a systematic review found that one of the most important facilitators of moving research into policy is personal contact between researchers and policymakers. (10)

Resources:

• **RAPID Outcome Mapping Approach: A guide to policy engagement and influence**

The RAPID Outcome Mapping Approach (ROMA) is a suite of tools that researchers and program implementer can use to improve their policy engagement processes, in order to influence change. Developed by the Research and Policy in Development Team (RAPID) of the Oversees Development Institute, ROMA consists of three main activities, each of which is broken down into a series of steps and a set of tools. ROMA evolved over a long period and through the documentation of more than 100 case studies on how research has or has not contributed to changes in policy and practice. The approach helps the user set realistic
objectives for policy influence, develop a plan to achieve those objectives, and monitor and learn from the progress they are making.

- **Policy Impact Toolkit: A guide to influencing policy through impact evaluation**

Co-produced by the International Initiative for Impact Evaluations (3ie) and the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), this toolkit is designed to support evaluators and researchers who are committed to engaging with decision makers to see the evidence from their studies used to build better policies and programmes. 3ie encourages funded research teams to move beyond dissemination and undertake activities during and after the research is conducted to engage policymakers and policy influencers and increase the likelihood that the research will inform policies. The Toolkit includes a Policy Influence Plan, which identifies what changes in attitude, discourse, procedures, policy content or legislation, or behaviours, and which key policy stakeholders or champions (policymakers, media, civil society organizations, professional associations and trade unions, religious groups etc.) a research team is targeting. Although 3ie requires grantees to complete the Policy Influence Plan, it is a useful resource for any research team wishing to plan for policy-influence.


This 39-page report summarizes discussions by workshop participants about research communication and uptake, measuring the impact of research communication, and the role of knowledge intermediaries. Additional conference materials can be found here.

- **Lessons Learnt from Health Researchers and Communication Experts at an International Meeting on Strengthening the Research to Policy and Practice Interface**

This brief summarizes discussions at a 2009 workshop designed to exchange ideas about
communicating research findings for policy and practice. The brief highlights the importance of assessing the relevance of research findings for policy, analyzing the political acceptability of the findings, and coming up with the best ways to frame the research to increase the receptivity of decision-makers.

- **Making Research Findings Actionable: A Quick Reference to Communicating Health Information for Decision-Making**

Researchers provide health information to empower stakeholders in making evidence-based decisions. However, research is frequently unavailable, inaccessible, irrelevant, or simply not useful—greatly limiting its power to improve a health system. An information dissemination strategy can increase the uptake of research information by stakeholders. A strategy should be considered when the research is being planned. The strategy should address the communication objectives, the target audiences, and the appropriate channels. This document suggests various approaches to help stakeholders make informed decisions about health policies.

- **Knowledge, Policy and Power: Six Dimensions of the Knowledge?Development Policy Interface**

This paper explores the interface between knowledge and policy with respect to six key areas: types of knowledge, political context, sectoral dynamics, actors, innovative frameworks, and knowledge translation. The aim is to stimulate nuanced debates among researchers, knowledge brokers, and policy-makers and to help them develop tools to improve communications.


This 259-page toolkit provides a helpful overview of some of the main issues involved in research utilization. It also offers strategies to help researchers focused on health policy and systems in low- and middle-income countries foster the utilization of their work. Twelve chapters cover such aspects of knowledge translation as strategies for promoting linkage and exchange, steps to devise a knowledge management strategy, political mapping and
situational analysis, developing a communications strategy, and making the best use of modern communication technologies.

- **Pathways to "Evidence-Informed" Policy and Practice: A Framework for Action**

A key challenge in public health is to better contextualize evidence for more effective policy-making and practice. Theory on the translation of research findings into policy and practice offers only part of the solution to this complex task. The policy-making context is highly political and rapidly changing, and it depends on a variety of factors, inputs, and relationships. In this short journal article, the authors propose that an "evidence-informed policy and practice pathway" can help both researchers and policy actors navigate the use of evidence. The pathway illustrates different types of evidence and their uses in health policy-making. It also proposes that specific capacities (e.g., an individual's skills, experience, and participation in networks) influence the adoption and adaptation of evidence in practice.

- **Evidence-Informed Policy Network (EVIPNet) News**

The Evidence-Informed Policy Network (EVIPNet) focuses on promoting the use of research-based evidence to develop policies in low-income and middle-income countries. The right-hand side of the home page contains EVIPNet news, which is a collection of recent research demonstrating successful use of research to inform policies.

**Advocacy Tools & Training Materials**

**Resources:**


This 83-page handbook offers tools for context assessment, including stakeholder analysis and Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis. Tools for communication (including positioning and position mapping and testing messages) and advocacy (including policy papers and networking) are also included.
Networking for Policy Change: An Advocacy Training Manual

This manual was prepared by the POLICY project to train representatives of nongovernmental organizations and other formal groups of civil society in the building blocks of advocacy: the formation of networks, the identification of political opportunities, and the organization of campaigns. The manual includes a section on each one. Although this handbook does not speak directly to researchers, the practical exercises can help researchers understand the policy process and how to translate research results into advocacy messages and campaigns.

Barriers to Policy Change

Resources:

- Researchers and Policymakers: Travelers in Parallel Universes

This journal article discusses reasons for the lack of consistent and systematic translation of scientific research into public policy, ways to increase the productivity and relevance of interactions between researchers and policy-makers, and related topics. Several tables and graphics are included in the article to help outline the motivations and decision-making processes of researchers versus policy-makers.

- Moving Beyond Research to Inform Policy: Barriers and Strategies in Developing Countries

The authors interviewed health researchers and policy-makers in Malawi, India, Pakistan, and Tanzania. Barriers between the two groups emerged from these conversations, including the lack of clear communication channels. The authors argue that researchers need to orient their work to a policy audience, and policy makers need to tell researchers about their
information needs.

- **Communicating Research to Policymakers: The Road to Inaction is Paved with Research Reports**

  This PowerPoint presentation from the workshop ?Moving Beyond Research to Inform Policy: Barriers and Strategies in Developing Countries? considers why a communication gap exists between researchers and policy-makers. The author notes that researchers and policy-makers have different roles and spheres of influence but suggests that policy communications can assist in bridging the gap. Policy communications consists of strategic planning and a continuous process of using multiple channels.

  Click here

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**Packaging Evidence into Advocacy Materials**

**Resources:**

- **Evidence Summaries Tailored to Health Policy-Makers in Low- and Middle-Income Countries**

  This journal article offers a field-tested format for presenting public health findings to policy-makers. Findings from a six-country study found that when presenting evidence from systematic reviews, policy-makers prefer short summaries with key messages up front. The summaries should be clear and easy to read, and they should explain how the findings are relevant for policy decisions.
The Case for Integrating Family Planning and HIV/AIDS Services: Evidence, Policy Support, and Programmatic Experience

Focusing on the integration of family planning and HIV/AIDS services, this set of briefs provides a helpful example of how research results can be packaged for advocacy purposes. It highlights changes in the policy environment, new programs, recent research results, and other developments in the integration field and guides a variety of stakeholders in strengthening their policies and programs regarding integration.

- Repositioning Family Planning: Guidelines for Advocacy Action

This toolkit provides guidance on how to renew interest in and improve advocacy for family planning in Africa. It serves as a helpful example of how family planning research results can be packaged for advocacy purposes.

Supporting Scale-Up
One of the anticipated outcomes of intervention-based research is that the intervention, if proven successful, will be scaled up to maximize its potential health impact. As with advocacy for policy change, researchers may not feel that planning or advocating for scale-up are in their purview. Yet, it is extremely important that researchers are connected with program managers and practitioners so that their research results can be more easily incorporated into programs, policies, and practice.

A growing body of literature on the science of scale-up highlights the importance of planning for the scale-up of health interventions as early in the research process as possible, such as during study design. Once a study has concluded, researchers can play a role in supporting scale-up by providing input into how an intervention could or should be adapted and how to measure the success of the intervention on a wider scale. Researchers can also offer information on possible challenges and their potential solutions.

The resources below provide guidance and tools to help researchers become and stay involved in planning, implementing, and measuring scale-up. More general resources can be found in the Scale-Up tab on this toolkit.

Scale up of health interventions can be defined as “deliberate efforts to increase the impact of successfully tested health interventions so as to benefit more people and to foster policy and programs development on a lasting basis.” (11)

Resources:

- **Approach for Addressing Policy in FP/MNCH**

This package of materials, developed by the Health Policy Project, presents a programming approach that provides planners and implementers with initial guidance and suggestions on how to systematically address policy development and implementation as they scale up FP/MNCH programs. The approach includes a short brief, a longer report, and a concise
poster.

- **Approach for Addressing Policy in Scale-up of FP/MNCH**

  This package of materials, developed by the Health Policy Project, presents a programming approach that provides planners and implementers with initial guidance and suggestions on how to systematically address policy development and implementation as they scale up FP/MNCH programs. The approach includes a short brief, a longer report, and a concise poster.

- **Guide for Monitoring Scale-up of Health Practices and Interventions**

  This guide is intended to provide governments, donors, country organizations, and implementing partners with a low cost and replicable approach to monitoring the process of scaling up innovations in health. The goal is to assist country stakeholders with identifying if scale-up is happening as intended; where, if necessary, there need to be mid-course corrections; and if the practice can be sustained to achieve the desired impact.

- **Scaling Up?From Vision to Large-Scale Change: A Management Framework for Practitioners**

  The concept of scale-up has received increasing attention as donors have recognized with concern the relatively poor record of innovative pilot projects extending their reach to large populations. This 61-page resource seeks to improve this track record through practical advice on a three-step, ten task process for effective scaling up. The framework is not specific to a particular sector. This is the Second Edition of this document and now includes a companion Scale-up Toolkit (also available in this section of the Research Utilization Toolkit).

- **Do We Have the Right Models for Scaling Up Health Services to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals?**

  Many global health initiatives have taken the same scale-up strategies and used them in very different countries, which has not helped many of the countries reach their Millennium
Development Goals. This systematic literature review identifies and describes six different conceptual models for scaling up health services in developing countries. The authors conclude that models that encourage "learning by doing" may be more effective than some of the current approaches.

• **Scaling-Up New Family Planning Methods: Untangling Metrics and Monitoring**

This presentation is a case study of monitoring and measuring the progress of programs that expand the provision of the Standard Days Method of contraception. The author describes the methods and metrics used, the challenges, and the lessons learned from researching the scale-up of the Standard Days Method. The presentation then moves on to discuss the larger question of researching scale-up.

• **Scaling Up in International Health: What Are the Key Issues?**

This journal article discusses four topics related to the scale-up of a public health intervention: the costs of scaling up coverage, constraints to scaling up, equity and quality concerns, and service-delivery issues. A commentary printed in response to the article, which takes the discussion even further, can be accessed here.

• **Beyond Scaling Up: Pathways to Universal Access**

This working paper from the STEPS Centre and its partners explores the challenge of managing major changes to health systems in low-income and middle-income countries. Improving access to the benefits of medical science, scaling up and managing organization
change, and alternative pathways for system-wide change are among the topics discussed.

- **Nine Steps for Developing a Scaling-Up Strategy**

  Researchers, policy-makers, and others may use this guide and its companion [Worksheets for Developing a Scaling-Up Strategy](#) to develop strategies for the scale-up of research interventions. Health managers in such diverse countries as China, Guatemala, and Kyrgyzstan have used these materials to develop scale-up strategies with their stakeholders.

- **Scaling Up Health Service Delivery: From Pilot Innovations to Policies and Programmes**

  This 208-page book provides a conceptual framework for scale-up and seven case studies illustrating the scale-up of reproductive health interventions.

- **20 Questions to Guide Development of Retrospective Case Studies in Scaling Up**

  ExpandNet developed this tool to support the network’s development of retrospective case studies of scaling up experiences in collaboration with the World Health Organization’s Implementing Best Practices Initiative and with Management Systems International.

- **A Guide for Fostering Change to Scale Up Effective Health Services**

  A task team of the Implementing Best Practices Consortium (a group of donors, providers, and technical assistance partners from developed and developing countries) have identified
effective management of change as the crucial step for successful scale-up of health services. This 46-page guide explains how to manage change and offers tools to support the effort. A Global Health e-Learning course is also available on ?Fostering Change in Health Services.? You will have to register with an email address and password to access this free course.

• **Accounting for the Cost of Scaling-Up Health Interventions**

When public health interventions are scaled up, policy-makers need to be able to plan for changes in costs. This abstract is for a journal article (full text available for a fee) describing a method the World Health Organization has used to analyze cost-effectiveness in a nonlinear fashion.

• **Facilitating Large-Scale Transitions to Quality of Care: An Idea Whose Time Has Come**

This journal article draws from research in the social sciences to discuss two frameworks for understanding the requirements for successful scale-up. Many of the lessons in the frameworks were developed from case studies of family planning scale-up in diverse countries.

• **Ten Dimensions of Scaling Up Reproductive Health Programs**

This series of briefs discusses 10 important dimensions for scale-up: change, capacity,
strategy, impact, sustainability, access, supply and demand, cost, resources, and timing of the scale-up. Although written for program managers, the practical questions posed in the briefs are also relevant for researchers who want to play a role in the scale-up of their research results.

- **ExpandNet**

ExpandNet is a global network of public health professionals dedicated to improving the science and practice of scale-up. Its website is an excellent source of materials and tools for the scale-up of health interventions in developing countries. Many of its articles and tools, as well as an extensive bibliography of literature on the science of scaling-up, are also featured in the ExpandNet/WHO Toolkit for Scaling Up Health Innovations.

**Research on Research Utilization**

Research is clearly important for establishing the effectiveness of a new practice, but research can also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of a research utilization strategy. According to some definitions (see below), the growing field of implementation science can be described as "research on research utilization." This type of research can range from assessing strategies for replicating effective interventions to evaluating the best ways to help change policies.

The resources below offer a variety of techniques and indicators for measuring the impact of the various strategies for research utilization. The journal *Implementation Science* is another good resource for up-to-date information on this topic.

Implementation science is the study of methods to promote the integration of research findings and evidence into healthcare policy and practice. *(12)*
FHI 360 Research Utilization Indicators

FHI 360 develop a set of indicators to track and measure the extent to which research produced under USAID-funded projects was moving into policy and/or practice. This list of 24 indicators is grouped into four categories: reach, use, capacity building, and collaboration. FHI 360 tracked and reported against these indicators as part of their Performance Monitoring Plan. These indicators may be helpful to other organizations or individuals trying to measure the Research Utilization outputs, outcomes and impact of a given activity or project.

Replicating an Intervention: The Tension between Fidelity and Adaptation

Ongoing monitoring of a public health intervention as it evolves can provide evidence to help researchers determine what components are core and must be retained when an intervention is replicated. This journal article describes the successful replication of an HIV prevention intervention among youth. The authors also discuss in depth many of the issues that can arise during the replication process.

Assessing the impact of research on policy: A review of the literature for a project on bridging research and policy through outcome evaluation

This is a final report of a commissioned literature review which aimed to explore and examine methods for evaluating the impact of research on policy outcomes. The review aimed to answer the following question: How do you (best) evaluate the impact of research programmes on policy? The following sub-questions were addressed:

- How do people evaluate the impact of research programmes?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of different approaches?
- Which methods are most effective?
• Which methods offer value for money?

• Are there any specific issues to consider when evaluating the impact of research on environmental policy?

Though the review sought literature with relevance to environmental research and policy, the findings and conclusions are relevant for other development areas.

• **A Practical, Robust Implementation and Sustainability Model (PRISM) for Integrating Research Findings into Practice**

This abstract is for a journal article (full text available for a fee) presenting a new model that researchers and health care decision-makers can use to anticipate what will be needed for an intervention that has been tested in a clinical trial to be implemented in a non-research setting. The article includes clear information in a table format and a useful checklist for enhancing research utilization.

• **Challenges in Replicating Interventions**

The authors of this journal article distinguish between faithful replication of a successful public health intervention and adaptation of the intervention to serve a particular community and culture. Both approaches have advantages and disadvantages. Article is available for free through PubMed summary page.

• **Research for Change: Using Implementation Research to Strengthen HIV Care and Treatment Scale-Up in Resource-Limited Settings**
Despite the expansion of HIV care and treatment in Africa and elsewhere, a gap remains between the practices that have been shown to be effective through clinical research and the practices that are actually used in the health care setting. This abstract is for a journal article (full text available for a fee) that considers the contributions that implementation research could make to close this tremendous gap. It also provides a good overview of implementation research and its relationship to other types of research, proposes opportunities for conducting implementation research, and outlines future steps to develop the field of implementation research.

- **Developing a Tool to Measure Knowledge Exchange Outcomes**

  The ?Knowledge Exchange Outcomes Tool? presented in this article can help researchers, practitioners, and decision-makers evaluate the uptake of many activities related to public health and health promotion. The tool was originally designed to measure the dissemination of best practices for the prevention of type-2 diabetes, but it can be adapted to research in other areas of population health and evaluation.

- **Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature**

  This monograph draws from a broad survey of publications about the implementation of research findings in order to define implementation and discover criteria for measuring its outcomes. The authors distinguish the core components of an intervention practice or program from those that can be adapted to circumstances when an intervention is replicated or scaled up.

- **Impact Measures for Health Research**

  This website describes a tool that provides researchers and other health professionals with an inventory of impact measures they can use to assess how research has been used to inform decision-making. Four different approaches to linking research to action, which can be used individually or in combination, have helped inform the tool. A related article that was
published in the *Journal of Health Services & Policy* is described [here](#).

- **Evaluating the Quality and Impact of Reproductive Health Research**

  This PowerPoint presentation was delivered at the conference *Moving Beyond Research to Inform Policy: Barriers and Strategies in Developing Countries.* The presentation explains a scoring system for evaluating the quality and impact of an operations research project in terms of different types of indicators. Process, impact, and contextual factors are collected, and then a collection instrument quantifies these different indicators with a numerical score. The scoring system allows one to identify those projects that have influenced service delivery or policy.

- **Measuring Knowledge Utilization: Processes and Outcomes**

  Many conceptual and methodological gaps remain in studies of knowledge utilization for public policy-making. One of these gaps is in the evaluation of knowledge utilization. This abstract is for a journal article (full text available for a fee) that focuses on this problem and makes suggestions for future studies.

**Guidance & Tools for Programs and Policy-Makers**
Decision-makers who guide the development of public health programs and policies often face urgent needs, complex problems, budget constraints, and insufficient time to choose the best public health responses to their problems. Program managers and policy-makers can address some of these challenges by seeking and establishing relationships with researchers and by identifying, understanding, and applying relevant evidence to help with decision-making. They can also help generate demand for the research that is needed to address pressing program or policy challenges.

This tab offers guidance and tools that decision-makers can use to increase the likelihood that research results will be used in programs and policies. Resources are available to help key decision-makers ensure that programs and policies are based on relevant and reliable evidence and that new research addresses the current challenges in public health.

**Overview**

**Involvement in Research**

**Identifying & Assessing Evidence**

**Evidence-Based Decision-Making**

**Scaling Up Evidence-Based Practices**

There needs to be a whole dialogue between policy-makers and researchers at the beginning of the research study, so that it becomes something that programmers have a vested interest in and researchers understand that vested interest and try to meet it. That might help to facilitate the uptake of research findings in decision-making.

--Quote from a policy-maker in Malawi (14)
Guidance & Tools for Programs and Policy-Makers Overview

The documents and tools below can help program managers and policy-makers navigate the research utilization process. Written specifically with these two groups of decision-makers in mind, they provide guidance on evidence-based decision-making, including how to use research and routine program data to improve program quality.

Resources:

- **VakaYiko Evidence-Informed Policy Making Toolkit**

  This Toolkit is a new resource in the field of evidence-informed policy making. It is an adaptable suite of resources created to support civil servants and parliamentary staff to use evidence in policy making in developing countries. It includes four modules:

  1. **Introduction to Evidence-Informed Policy Making** including the role of evidence in policymaking process; different kinds of evidence, who uses them and why

  2. **A Complete Search Strategy** including how to access different types evidence in developing countries, using networks, and searching databases effectively

  3. **Assessing Evidence** including analysing source, credibility, bias and quality, as well as basic principles of research methodology

  4. **Communicating Evidence** including tailoring messages to decision makers, writing policy briefs, preparing infographics and oral presentations

  For each module, there is a Trainer’s Manual containing; handouts, activities, presentations and readings to deliver training in EIPM. This also includes an Action Planning template and a set of activities which can be used to develop individual or departmental Action Plans for
EIPM. Also included in the Toolkit is a series of corresponding Practical Handbooks for civil servants and parliamentary staff, as well as some associated promotional resources to raise awareness about evidence use in public institutions.

- SUPPORT Tools for Evidence-Informed Health Policymaking

This series of 18 briefs helps policy-makers and those working with policy-makers find and use research to make evidence-based decisions. The briefs discuss the general meaning of evidence-informed policy-making and highlight more specific topics, such as using evidence on resource use and costs, preparing policy briefs to support evidence-based policy-making, and using research to balance the pros and cons of policies. Every brief in the series is also accompanied by a practical tool to use.

- Conceptualizing and Combining Evidence for Health System Guidance

This document reviews how research-based evidence is treated by the scientists who produce it, those who formulate guidance, and those who make program and policy decisions. It also examines the deliberative process of combining different forms of evidence to produce guidance for health systems.

- Going Beyond Research: A Key Issues Paper Raising Discussion Points Related to Dissemination, Utilisation and Impact of Reproductive and Sexual Health Research

This key issues paper is drawn from the two-day workshop “Moving Beyond Research to Influence Policy,” held at the University of Southampton in January 2001. The paper considers research utilization from the perspectives of decision-makers, researchers, and donors. It also explores the relationships among these three groups.

- Issues in Linkage and Exchange between Researchers and Decision Makers
This 31-page document summarizes the proceedings of a workshop that brought together more than 100 researchers, research funders, and decision-makers from across Canada to review and discuss the challenge of research dissemination and uptake. The workshop participants identified concrete actions to promote linkage and exchange among researchers and decision-makers.

- Knowledge Translation Methods and Tools for Public Health

This website provides tools for those who work in public health, such as frontline practitioners, knowledge brokers, health promoters, managers, decision-makers, policy-makers, evaluators, and researchers. The tools should help in the “planning, doing, and evaluating” of different types of knowledge translation activities, including knowledge dissemination, knowledge synthesis, knowledge exchange, and knowledge application.

- The Informed Decisions Toolbox

This toolkit was developed to help health care managers and policy-makers find, assess, adapt, and apply research evidence to their decision-making processes. It includes a general overview of evidence-based health care management, six steps for managers to consider when making well-informed decisions, and links to additional resources on evidence-based decision-making.

Involvement in Research
Program managers and policy-makers can address some of the common barriers to research utilization by establishing and maintaining relationships with researchers throughout the research process. They can begin by expressing their program and policy needs during the conceptualization and design of a study. This includes identifying ?researchable? questions generated through routine delivery of health services, and then communicating those questions to researchers as part of a ?practice to research? loop.

When an intervention is being proposed for study, decision-makers can use established criteria to determine whether a proposed intervention is likely to lead to successful scale-up (see CORRECT sidebar). If feasible, they can also help alter the interventions to better comply with the criteria.

Once a research question has been decided and a research study has begun, program managers and policy-makers can help resolve implementation problems, offer suggestions for adjusting the intervention if necessary, help interpret data, and provide feedback on early results. Decision-makers can also communicate to researchers that they expect to receive detailed information about how the intervention was implemented and how much it will cost to facilitate replication and scale-up.

The resources below can help decision-makers establish effective collaborations with researchers at all stages of the research process. Additional information on stakeholder engagement and collaborative research can be found under the Practical Strategies tab of the toolkit.

**Resources:**

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Beginning with the End in Mind

This guidance document offers 12 recommendations to help researchers and other stakeholders plan for scale-up at the same time they plan their studies. A checklist is also included to help build these recommendations into the study plans.

• A Checklist for Health Research Priority Setting: Nine Common Themes of Good Practice

This short document offers guidance in the form of a checklist for researchers and stakeholders to work together so that research is consistent with needs and contexts. The checklist was developed based on a literature review and on an analysis of the World Health Organization’s health research priority-setting exercises beginning in 2005.

• Revisiting Interaction in Knowledge Translation

The involvement of stakeholders in research yields varying degrees of success in the transition of results to practice. This journal article considers four conditions that have an effect on the outcome.

• Turning Research into Practice: Suggested Actions from Case-Studies of Sexual and Reproductive Health Research

This link takes you to a report of two technical consultations that the World Health Organization convened in 2003 and 2004 on the topic of research utilization. The report is divided into two main sections: one on concepts and pathways of research utilization and one on case studies. The book is intended to help readers increase the utilization of research and monitor the extent to which evidence is used to improve sexual and reproductive health.

• A Guide to Researcher and Knowledge-User Collaboration in Health Research

This is an online tutorial with modules on such topics as identifying partners, taking stock of
barriers and facilitators, and working collaboratively to design a study.

• Community of Practice Design Guide: A Step-by-Step Guide for Creating Collaborative Communities of Practice

This short document includes tips for groups in disparate domains to work together to achieve complementary goals.

• Moving Beyond Research to Inform Policy: Barriers and Strategies in Developing Countries

The authors interviewed health researchers and policy-makers in Malawi, India, Pakistan, and Tanzania. Barriers between the two groups emerged from these conversations, including the lack of clear communication channels. The authors argue that researchers need to orient their work to a policy audience, and policy makers need to tell researchers about their information needs.

• How to Be a Good Research Partner: A Guide for Health-System Managers and Policy Makers

This short document for decision-makers describes the challenges and rewards of a collaborative relationship with researchers.

Identifying & Assessing Evidence
Program managers and policy-makers may know that research or other forms of evidence (e.g., routine health system data, program evaluations, and economic analyses) can help identify promising new approaches to pressing public health problems. However, they may not know where to find that information, how to judge its credibility, how to analyze its relevance, or how to adapt the findings to meet their own program or policy needs. In the journal Nature, two scientists suggest 20 tips to help politicians parse how evidence can contribute to a decision, and potentially to avoid undue influence by those with vested interests.

The resources listed on the two pages linked to below provide guidance on identifying research and other forms of evidence, analyzing them, and determining their usefulness in different contexts.

**Understanding Research and Other Evidence**

**Where to Find Useful Evidence**

Policymakers can go a long way toward understanding the scientific basis of many debates if they keep in mind a hierarchy of questions suggested by Brian Haynes for evaluating any health intervention: Can it work? Will it work? Is it worth it? (15)

**Understanding Research and Other Evidence**

**Resources:**

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SUPPORT Tools for Evidence-Informed Health Policymaking

This series of 18 briefs helps policy-makers and those working with policy-makers find and use research to make evidence-based decisions. The briefs discuss the general meaning of evidence-informed policy-making and highlight more specific topics, such as using evidence on resource use and costs, preparing policy briefs to support evidence-based policy-making, and using research to balance the pros and cons of policies. Every brief in the series is also accompanied by a practical tool to use.


This 259-page toolkit provides a helpful overview of some of the main issues involved in research utilization. It also offers strategies to help researchers focused on health policy and systems in low- and middle-income countries foster the utilization of their work. Twelve chapters cover such aspects of knowledge translation as strategies for promoting linkage and exchange, steps to devise a knowledge management strategy, political mapping and situational analysis, developing a communications strategy, and making the best use of modern communication technologies.

- A Compendium of Critical Appraisal Tools for Public Health Practice

This document, designed for public health decision-makers in practice or policy, offers links to some of the more commonly used tools to assess the quality of research.

- Knowledge Translation Methods and Tools for Public Health

This website provides tools for those who work in public health, such as frontline practitioners, knowledge brokers, health promoters, managers, decision-makers, policy-makers, evaluators, and researchers. The tools should help in the "planning, doing, and
evaluating” of different types of knowledge translation activities, including knowledge dissemination, knowledge synthesis, knowledge exchange, and knowledge application.

- **The Informed Decisions Toolbox**

  This toolkit was developed to help health care managers and policy-makers find, assess, adapt, and apply research evidence to their decision-making processes. It includes a general overview of evidence-based health care management, six steps for managers to consider when making well-informed decisions, and links to additional resources on evidence-based decision-making.

- **What Researchers Mean By. . .**

  *At Work*, the newsletter of the Institute for Work & Health, has included a column on commonly used research terms since 2005. The column can help program managers and decision-makers better understand the language researchers use when reporting their findings. Features on such topics as “grey literature,” “sample size and power,” and “absolute and relative risk?” can be accessed here.

- **Critical Appraisal Skills Programme**

  This set of tools uses questions to guide the user to understand and assess the potential usefulness of studies in terms of their fidelity to specific research methods. Examples include questions about making sense of qualitative research, randomized controlled trials, systematic reviews, case control studies, cohort studies, and economic evaluations.


  Policy-makers and program managers can use this tool to assess how well their organizations are finding, adapting, and using research. It will also help them identify areas
for improvement. An open-access article validating the tool's use in Canadian healthcare organizations can be found here.

Where to Find Useful Evidence

Resources:

- **Find Evidence: What works in development programmes and why?**

  The International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie) has developed a web-based function called Find Evidence, a database of policy briefs, systematic reviews and impact evaluations. The policy briefs draw out the policy implications from key findings of impact evaluations and systematic reviews, including policy highlights that analyze key findings from 3-5 impact evaluations on policy relevant questions. Find Evidence's systematic review database includes 200 summaries of systematic reviews while their impact evaluation database contains information on over 2500 impact evaluations and links to the original studies.

- **Global Health eLearning Center**

  Program managers and policy-makers should be encouraged to request and use the type of data that will help them make important program and policy decisions. This link takes you to a list of free online courses to provide professionals with access to technical information on a variety of public health topics. Data use for program managers and using data from demographic and health surveys are among the topics that are highlighted.

- **Cochrane Reviews**

  This is an online, searchable archive of systematic reviews of primary research in human health care and health policy.
• **WHO Reproductive Health Library**

This online resource is available in multiple languages. It draws from Cochrane Reviews to create practical guidance for medical practitioners and policy-makers, paying special attention to applications of research to meet needs in developing countries.

• **Public Health +**

This is a searchable database of articles from 120 journals, updated weekly. The articles are scored for the soundness of the research method employed. A weekly newsletter reports material newly added to the archive.

• **Directory of Open Access Journals**

Open access journals do not charge readers or institutions for access to their content. This website archives journals in public health, general medicine, nursing, and dentistry.

**Evidence-Based Decision-Making**
After program managers and policy-makers identify and assess the quality of evidence on a certain topic, they must next make decisions about whether and how that evidence can be incorporated into their work. Program managers might decide to modify a public health program based on routine health system data. Policy-makers might decide that existing but underused research findings merit the development of a new health policy or the revision of an existing one. Program managers or policy-makers could consider whether an evidence-based intervention should be replicated or scaled up in a new setting.

The resources below provide guidance and tools to help make well-informed program and policy decisions and determine whether and how to adopt a new intervention. Within this tab, the subsection on scaling up evidence-based practices gives more specific guidance on how to replicate an intervention or expand it on a larger scale.

Resources:

- **Knowledge, Policy and Power: Six Dimensions of the Knowledge?Development Policy Interface**

  This paper explores the interface between knowledge and policy with respect to six key areas: types of knowledge, political context, sectoral dynamics, actors, innovative frameworks, and knowledge translation. The aim is to stimulate nuanced debates among researchers, knowledge brokers, and policy-makers and to help them develop tools to improve communications.

- **Making Policy When the Evidence Is in Dispute**

  This journal article offers a questionnaire to help policy-makers separate issues of evidence from conflicts over values and perspectives. Four policy debates from the medical field are also used as case studies to show how the questionnaire can help decision-makers see both
sides of an argument.

• **Researchers and Policymakers: Travelers in Parallel Universes**

This journal article discusses reasons for the lack of consistent and systematic translation of scientific research into public policy, ways to increase the productivity and relevance of interactions between researchers and policy-makers, and related topics. Several tables and graphics are included in the article to help outline the motivations and decision-making processes of researchers versus policy-makers.

• **Pathways to "Evidence-Informed" Policy and Practice: A Framework for Action**

A key challenge in public health is to better contextualize evidence for more effective policy-making and practice. Theory on the translation of research findings into policy and practice offers only part of the solution to this complex task. The policy-making context is highly political and rapidly changing, and it depends on a variety of factors, inputs, and relationships. In this short journal article, the authors propose that an "evidence-informed policy and practice pathway" can help both researchers and policy actors navigate the use of evidence. The pathway illustrates different types of evidence and their uses in health policy-making. It also proposes that specific capacities (e.g., an individual's skills, experience, and participation in networks) influence the adoption and adaptation of evidence in practice.

• **Evidence-Informed Policy Network (EVIPNet) News**

The Evidence-Informed Policy Network (EVIPNet) focuses on promoting the use of research-based evidence to develop policies in low-income and middle-income countries. The right-hand side of the home page contains EVIPNet news, which is a collection of recent research demonstrating successful use of research to inform policies.

• **The Informed Decisions Toolbox**

This toolkit was developed to help health care managers and policy-makers find, assess, adapt, and apply research evidence to their decision-making processes. It includes a general overview of evidence-based health care management, six steps for managers to consider
when making well-informed decisions, and links to additional resources on evidence-based decision-making.

Replicating Tested Interventions

Resources:

- Replicating an Intervention: The Tension between Fidelity and Adaptation

Ongoing monitoring of a public health intervention as it evolves can provide evidence to help researchers determine what components are core and must be retained when an intervention is replicated. This journal article describes the successful replication of an HIV prevention intervention among youth. The authors also discuss in depth many of the issues that can arise during the replication process.

- Will It Work Here? A Decisionmaker’s Guide to Adopting Innovations

This guidebook offers 116 pages of practical advice to promote evidence-based decision-making, and help decision-makers in health care organizations determine whether to adopt an intervention. The book is divided into four modules focused on determining whether an intervention fits in the new setting, whether it should be implemented, whether it is feasible to implement it, and how it will be implemented and evaluated. A table on pages 3-4 guides the user through a series of questions, linked to specific passages in the book, to help with this process.

- Implementing Evidence-Based Interventions in Health Care: Application of the Replicating Effective Programs Framework

This journal article describe a framework to help prepare clinical or health-service interventions for implementation in community-based settings. Developed by a project of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the framework allows for flexibility but still
maximizes fidelity when replicating the intervention in a new setting.

- **Intervention Complexity? A Conceptual Framework to Inform Priority-Setting in Health**

This journal article describes a framework that program managers and policy-makers can use to help decide whether to expand an existing intervention or introduce a new intervention. Based on the concept that every intervention requires a different degree of effort and resources for implementation, the framework shows users how to examine the technical complexity of an intervention to assess the feasibility of replicating it. Article available for free on the PubMed summary page or WHO Bulletin.

**Tools**

**Resources:**

- **SUPPORT Tools for Evidence-Informed Health Policymaking**

This series of 18 briefs helps policy-makers and those working with policy-makers find and use research to make evidence-based decisions. The briefs discuss the general meaning of evidence-informed policy-making and highlight more specific topics, such as using evidence on resource use and costs, preparing policy briefs to support evidence-based policy-making, and using research to balance the pros and cons of policies. Every brief in the series is also accompanied by a practical tool to use.

- **Applicability and Transferability of Evidence Tool**
This website provides a link to a tool to help program managers and policy planners make important public health decisions. They can use the tool to help them incorporate high-quality evidence into their programs and policies and to decide the relevance of programs and policies that have already been proposed.

Use of Routine Health Data

Resources:

• Data Demand and Use

MEASURE Evaluation has developed a conceptual framework that explains the context in which health data are used to make decisions, how this context affects demand for more data, and how data can be strategically collected, analyzed, and used to inform programs and policies. The framework is accompanied by a toolkit, training curricula, guidance documents and other resources that can be used to apply the framework in real-world settings. Data Demand and Use in the Health Sector is a series of case studies that also help show how the framework can be applied.

• Global Health eLearning Center

Program managers and policy-makers should be encouraged to request and use the type of data that will help them make important program and policy decisions. This link takes you to a list of free online courses to provide professionals with access to technical information on a variety of public health topics. Data use for program managers and using data from demographic and health surveys are among the topics that are highlighted.
Scaling Up Evidence-Based Practices

One of the anticipated outcomes of intervention-based research is that, if proven to be effective, the intervention will be scaled up to maximize its potential health impact. Scale-up can involve either introduction or replication of an intervention on a small scale in a new setting, or it can refer to wide-spread expansion within part or even all of a country. Although no blueprints are available on how to effectively replicate or scale-up an intervention, key themes and lessons are emerging about the topic.

Scale-up requires strategic planning and management of the changes that will occur among individuals, within an organization, and within health systems as the intervention becomes more widely implemented. It also requires communication with and commitment from a range of stakeholders so that consensus can be reached on what the most appropriate approaches are for moving an intervention from a pilot project to a large-scale program. Scale-up is also most effective when it is monitored closely in collaboration with researchers or evaluators.

The resources below provide a range of guidance and tools to help you incorporate evidence-based interventions into your programs and to scale them up effectively and sustainably. Additional resources on this topic can be found within the Scale-Up tab of the toolkit.

It is not enough to know "what works." We also need to know how it works and why it should be done. This requires knowledge of context, actors and implementation processes for complex change, as well as understanding the values motivating sustained action. (18)
Resources:

- **Guide for Monitoring Scale-up of Health Practices and Interventions**

  This guide is intended to provide governments, donors, country organizations, and implementing partners with a low cost and replicable approach to monitoring the process of scaling up innovations in health. The goal is to assist country stakeholders with identifying if scale-up is happening as intended; where, if necessary, there need to be mid-course corrections; and if the practice can be sustained to achieve the desired impact.

- **Approach for Addressing Policy in FP/MNCH**

  This package of materials, developed by the Health Policy Project, presents a programming approach that provides planners and implementers with initial guidance and suggestions on how to systematically address policy development and implementation as they scale up FP/MNCH programs. The approach includes a short brief, a longer report, and a concise poster.

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- **Scaling Up?From Vision to Large-Scale Change: A Management Framework for Practitioners**

  The concept of scale-up has received increasing attention as donors have recognized with concern the relatively poor record of innovative pilot projects extending their reach to large populations. This 61-page resource seeks to improve this track record through practical
advice on a three-step, ten task process for effective scaling up. The framework is not specific to a particular sector. This is the Second Edition of this document and now includes a companion Scale-up Toolkit (also available in this section of the Research Utilization Toolkit).

• **Dissemination, Diffusion, and Scale Up of Family Health Innovations in Low-Income Countries**

The evidence-based AIDED model can help guide the dissemination, diffusion, and scale-up of family health innovations in low-income countries. This document describes the model, including its five main components that have been linked to successful scale-up, and provides examples of its use.

• **Do We Have the Right Models for Scaling Up Health Services to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals?**

Many global health initiatives have taken the same scale-up strategies and used them in very different countries, which has not helped many of the countries reach their Millennium Development Goals. This systematic literature review identifies and describes six different conceptual models for scaling up health services in developing countries. The authors conclude that models that encourage ?learning by doing? may be more effective than some of the current approaches.

• **Scaling Up in International Health: What Are the Key Issues?**

This journal article discusses four topics related to the scale-up of a public health intervention: the costs of scaling up coverage, constraints to scaling up, equity and quality concerns, and service-delivery issues. A commentary printed in response to the article, which takes the discussion even further, can be accessed here.
Nine Steps for Developing a Scaling-Up Strategy

Researchers, policy-makers, and others may use this guide and its companion Worksheets for Developing a Scaling-Up Strategy to develop strategies for the scale-up of research interventions. Health managers in such diverse countries as China, Guatemala, and Kyrgyzstan have used these materials to develop scale-up strategies with their stakeholders.

How Much Will It Cost to Scale Up a Reproductive Health Pilot Project?

This brief explains how to adapt and modify cost information obtained from a pilot project to estimate scale-up costs. It is designed to help managers think critically about the factors that must be considered in estimating the costs of scaling up an effective intervention.

A Guide for Fostering Change to Scale Up Effective Health Services

A task team of the Implementing Best Practices Consortium (a group of donors, providers, and technical assistance partners from developed and developing countries) have identified effective management of change as the crucial step for successful scale-up of health services. This 46-page guide explains how to manage change and offers tools to support the effort. A Global Health e-Learning course is also available on ?Fostering Change in Health Services.? You will have to register with an email address and password to access this free course.

Source URL: https://www.k4health.org/toolkits/research-utilization