

Implementation Science: Program Implementers Perspective

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EGPAF Strategy: Three Integrated Areas of Focus

Global Policy and Advocacy

Global Program
Implementation



Global Research

EGPAF– GWU PARTNERSHIP FOR PEDIATRIC AIDS AND PUBLIC HEALTH

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The link between evidence and implementation

- Strong Scientific Evidence \neq Policy \neq Implementation
 - Interventions with strong scientific evidence (RCT) may not be feasible
 - Interventions with less strength of evidence (OR) may be more timely
 - Culture of policy/implementation in absence of evidence
- WHO guidelines based on systematic reviews of evidence based on published works
 - Published literature often does not reflect evidence base
 - Recommendations may be made based on weak or no direct evidence
- Research results may be weak but public advocacy may drive action



Evolving Models that promote IS

- Researchers as Researchers
- Researchers as Program Implementers
- Program Implementers as Researchers
- Policy Makers as Researchers
- Researchers as Policy Makers

Evidence and Policy/Practice

- Dialogue required between researchers and policy makers to determine what is needed to provide “convincing results” to change policy
- Dialogue between researchers and program implementers to determine what is needed to provide “convincing results” to change practice
 - The more program managers are involved in the study design, the more likely they are to implement results
- Thinking through the post study “so-what?” from the beginning, with the initial generation of the research question
 - How will the research results influence practice or policy beyond publication of a manuscript?
 - What needs to be in place before and after the study to facilitate translation of results to practice?
 - What can be learned from the implementation of the study, in addition to the study results?

Strategies for Success

- Research questions must be relevant to programme implementation & connected to health service delivery
- Strong **bi-directional** partnerships for research, particularly implementation research
 - Academia, local researchers, MOH, and NGOs, who are often implementers that engage in translating research into policy and practice
- Capacity building of policy makers and program implementers
 - Culture of evidence driven policies and programs; Increased quality/use of national data
 - Research skills in operations and implementation research
- Prioritizing resources to facilitate non-traditional NIH type research methodologies and analyses
 - Mechanisms that allow IS researchers to compete successfully with academicians for funding

Challenges for Program Implementers and IS

- Investing critical time up front to develop relationships, understand gaps being addressed, and design and evaluate feasible solutions
- Balancing research rigor with reality in study design, budget, **timeline**
 - MOH/Donor pressure for rapid scale-up; competing time demands
- Different interpretations of human subjects vs non subjects research
- Continually evolving guidelines with changes implemented while studies in progress
- Multiple concurrent activities being done in the field making attribution difficult