

**AFIDEP**

**African Institute for Development Policy**  
Bridging Development Research, Policy & Practice

# Implementing EIPM Training for Policymakers: Experiences from Kenya & Malawi

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# AFIDEP in Brief

- Regional policy think-tank founded in 2010
- To help bridge the research-to-policy gap in development efforts in Africa
- Has offices in Kenya & Malawi, implements knowledge synthesis & translation programmes across Africa
  - Works hand-in-hand with various governments in Africa

# Why AFIDEP?

## The Research to Policy Challenge

- Research is fragmented or missing
- Research not appropriately packaged
- Input of end-users rarely taken into account
- Local capacity to translate & apply evidence is weak
- Policies are driven by politics

# AFIDEP's Approach

- We seek to contribute to the realisation of **sustainable socioeconomic development** in SSA
- To do this, we conduct 3 main activities:
  - **Synthesise & translate** research & related evidence
  - Package, promote & enable **utilisation of the evidence** by decision-makers
  - Strengthen technical **capacity in translation & use of research evidence** (i.e. capacity building)
- Two main areas of work:
  - Health Systems Strengthening
  - Population Change & Sustainable Development

**Strengthening Capacity to Use  
Research Evidence in Health Policy  
(SECURE Health) Programme**

# SECURE Health Programme

**SECURE Health** focuses on addressing ‘**demand-side**’ barriers to research evidence use in decision-making in the health sector

## **Primary Objective:**

Support strengthening of institutional & individual **capacity** needed to **stimulate demand & use of research evidence** in decision-making in the Ministry of Health & Parliament in Kenya & Malawi

*- Lessons to East & Southern Africa through ECSA-HC*

# SECURE Health Objectives

1. Optimize institutional leadership & capacity to enhance evidence use
2. Enhance individual skills & capacity of policymakers in the health ministry & the legislature in accessing, appraising, synthesising & using evidence

# SECURE Health is a Partnership

- SECURE Health is a consortium of 5 institutions partnering with MoH & Parliament in Kenya & Malawi
- Funded by UK-DFID's Building Capacity to Use Research Evidence (BCURE) programme
- 3-year programme – Nov 2013-Jan 2017



# Interventions for Achieving Obj. 1: Strengthening Institutional Leadership & Capacity

1. High-level national & regional advocacy to strengthen leadership & address institutional bottlenecks to evidence use
2. Develop a national health research agenda for Kenya & review the impact of Malawi's 2011 National Health Research Agenda
3. Develop Institutional Guidelines for Evidence Use
4. Host regular science-policy cafés to strengthen linkages bwn policymakers & researchers in deliberating priority health policy issues



# Interventions for Achieving Obj. 2: Strengthening Technical Capacity for Evidence Utilisation

1. Develop & implement an EIPM Training programme for middle-level technical staff in the MoH & Parliament in Kenya & Malawi
2. Facilitate an internship programme with UK POST for parliament staff from Kenya & Malawi



# Internal Monitoring, Learning & Evaluation

- Baseline & end-line surveys
- Mid-term review
- Retrospective & prospective policy analysis studies to examine the role of evidence in actual policymaking
- Pre-post tests, bi-monthly interviews with EIPM trainees
- Gathering testimonials
- Newsletters, blogs, conference presentations & journal publications



# **Evidence-Informed Policymaking (EIPM) Training Programme**

# Polymakers Targeted for Training

**Mid-level polymakers – technocrats in MoH & Parliament with responsibility for providing policy technical advice, drafting policy documents**

## *MoH*

- Heads of Divisions, Units
- Programme Managers
- M&E Officers

## *Parliament*

- Researchers/policy analysts
- Committee clerks, library & information staff

# Main Objective of EIPM Training Programme

- Enhance the capacity of learners in:
  - Appreciating the complexity of decision-making processes & the critical role of evidence
  - Accessing research evidence
  - Appraising research evidence
  - Synthesizing research, and
  - Applying research evidence in decision-making

# EIPM Training Programme – Key Features

1. Development of an EIPM training curriculum
  - Covering foundation of policymaking, defining policy questions, accessing, appraising, synthesizing & applying evidence
  - Informed by adult learning principles
2. Competitive selection of learners – faced challenges
3. Delivery of EIPM training workshops
  - Pre-training reading & engagement
  - 5-day training workshop – learners initiate development of a policy brief
  - Pre- & post-test survey; session evaluations
  - Learners' contract

# EIPM Training Programme – Key Features

4. Conduct 1-year training follow-up programme for all learners
5. Present certificates of participation & completion only to those who successfully complete courses & present policy briefs at final dissemination activities



# EIPM Trainers

- Trainers drawn from SECURE Health consortium (AFIDEP, FHI 360, College of Medicine, MoH)
- All trainers were trained in pedagogical training techniques & adult learning principles
- Trainers serve as mentors & review & provide feedback on policy briefs during follow-up process

# Breakdown of Trained Staff

	Kenya		Malawi		Total
	MoH	Parliament	MoH/MoY	Parliament	
Workshop 1 (Mar 2015)	15	5	13	5	<b>37</b>
Workshop 2 (Apr 2015)	14	6	12	7	<b>39</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>76</b>
<i>Total Trained (country)</i>	<b>40</b>		<b>36</b>		

**So what effect did the training have immediately after?**

***Some Highlights of the Pre & Post-Test Results - Kenya***

# Pre & Post Test Results-Kenya: Workshops – field-test, 1, & 2

Immediate EIPM Training impact:

- The overall rating of the effectiveness of the training workshops in improving participants' knowledge, skills, & attitudes for accessing, appraising, synthesizing & applying evidence was well above 4 on a Likert scale, for all workshops

# Pre & Post Test Results-Kenya: Workshops – field-test, 1, & 2

Extent to which workshop objective was met:

- Workshop 1 participants rated all the objectives from 3.95 & above using the Likert scale 1 to 5
- Workshop 2 participants rated all objectives from 3.85 & above
- Field-test workshop participants rated all objectives above 4

# Pre & Post Test Results-Kenya: Workshops – field-test, 1, & 2

## Effect of training on skills

- Participants' ratings of their skills in to accessing, appraising, synthesizing & applying evidence pre & post training revealed an increase of 1 or more points in the rating post-training
  - Indicating a perceived increase in the skills that the training covered

# Pre & Post Test Results-Kenya: Workshops – field-test, 1, & 2

Effect of training on Barriers to Evidence Use  
(barriers relating to technical knowledge & skills)

- Participants' rating of these barriers improved, indicating that the training had helped alleviate the barriers

# Pre & Post Test Results-Kenya: Workshops – field-test, 1, & 2

- The main aspect of the workshop that was rated poorly was **time allocation**
  - With most participants indicating that the time allocated for the training was inadequate



**What has been our experience with the 1-Year EIPM Training Follow-up Programme?**

# Why the EIPM Training Follow-up?

- Support learners in application of skills acquired (on-the-job support)
- Identify & address gaps in the training offered
  - Areas where learners need more technical assistance, & provide refresher training or on-the-job assistance
- Learn about how learners are applying skills acquired & challenges they still face
- Support learners in the revision & completion of policy briefs, with support from their supervisors

# Structure of the Follow-up Process

1. Individualized contact with each learner via email/phone/face-to-face – once every 2 months
  - To find out how learners are applying knowledge & skills, the challenges they still face in evidence use, identify areas where they need support, & track progress on policy briefs
2. One follow-up workshop once every 4 months
  - To conduct refresher training on specific EIPM modules
  - To review & provide feedback on draft policy briefs
  - To show-case/deliberate policy briefs with senior policymakers

# Highlights of the follow-up programme

- Conducted 5-waves of the individual follow-up support process
- Conducted 2 sets of follow-up workshops:
  - Delivered short refresher training on appraising evidence & policy brief development (i.e. research evidence synthesis)
- Many examples of skills application:
  - Drawing attention to research evidence within their units
  - Finding research relevant to their work or the work of their units
  - Assessing quality of research evidence before considering it
  - Using evidence to draw attention to neglected issues
- 15 policy briefs completed in Malawi, 12 in Kenya
  - These will be disseminated at final workshops next month

# Key Follow-up Challenges

- Actual on the job-support has been difficult:
  - Parliament declined, citing sensitivity
  - Many MoH learners have not been forthcoming on sharing real work tasks where we can support
- Progress on policy briefs development has been slow
  - Learners too busy
  - Poor Internet connectivity at work
- Poor turn-up at follow-up training workshops

# How have we handled the challenges?

- More ownership & involvement of MoH/Parliament in the follow-up process
  - Extensive consultations with leadership of the MoH & parliament to seek their ideas & commitment to address the challenges
  - Convening follow-up workshops
  - Training follow-up contracts shared with Supervisors
- One-on-one or small-group follow-up consultations for those unable to come to workshops

# How have we handled the challenges?

- Increased interaction between learners & trainers/mentors
- Systematized the follow-up process in order to collect comprehensive data to enable structured learning from the process

# **Key Lessons So Far**



# Well designed & implemented EIPM programme is effective in building knowledge & skills in research evidence use

- Pre & post-test results; quality of policy briefs developed
- Testimonials of how learners are using skills
  - Many show how learners are changing their thinking & approach to decision-making
- External evaluation results:
  - Revealed changing practices towards a culture of evidence use
- Huge demand for training at MoH & County level:
  - Kenya MoH has highly recommended EIPM training for counties
  - County leadership are demanding EIPM training – Samburu, Kakamega, Nairobi, Kajiado

# Lessons on specific training components

- Follow-up programmes in contexts with weak culture for evidence use & general accountability need careful & intense planning
  - Need to think about incentives - Is the solution close involvement of supervisors before & after the training?
  - Can drain project resources
- Anticipate failure & mitigate, or be clear on how to handle it when it happens
  - Good relationship with the leadership of the beneficiary institutions is critical
  - Find ways of gauging commitment of learners ...

# Lessons on specific training components

- Collecting detailed & systematic follow-up data is critical for documenting learning from the programme
  - Helps make informed decisions on how to deal with unresponsive learners
  - Provides evidence for focusing short refresher trainings
  - Provides comprehensive data for publications to share learning
  - But, it can drain resources, especially in milestone-based fixed contracts

# Reflections...

- How do we structure incentives for EIPM training & follow-up?
  - Is it a question of recruiting the wrong people? How can you effectively recruit the right people?
  - What are some of the innovative ways for overcoming the culture of attending training for training's sake?
- Training follow-up programmes could be shorter – perhaps one year is too long?
- Is the over-reliance on consultants in drafting key policy & other documents killing capacity & commitment for MoH staff in capacity building efforts?

# We Acknowledge our Partners



Government of Kenya:  
Ministry of Health,  
Parliament



Government of  
Malawi: Ministry of  
Health, Parliament



**AFIDEP**

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oo yea, eeeh, best of luck now:-)

user, 1/26/2016