Unpacking the pathways from Evidence into Action

Leveraging the research continuum with early, continuous, responsible engagement between policy makers and academia enhances HIV-prevention evidence uptake

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#GESummit2017
@EHPSAprog
Disclosure Statement

Name: Evidence for HIV Prevention in Southern Africa Programme

Timeframe: 2014 – 2018

Research target groups
Vulnerable groups: Adolescents & Key Populations: Prisoners and MSM

Active countries:
South Africa, Namibia, Swaziland, Malawi, Zambia, Kenya, Tanzania

Donors:
DFID and Sweden (£12,542,650)

Managed by:
Mott MacDonald

“I am employed as consultant by Mott MacDonald and the Technical Lead on Evidence into Action for the EHPSA Programme. I am presenting on behalf of EHPSA and do not have a direct or indirect conflict of interest in the context or content of this presentation.”
Context Matters

Prisons  Gay  Criminal
MSM  Making  Girls
Evidence  Decision  HIV
Sex  HIV  Rape
Research  Sexual
Violence  AIDS
Prevention
Adolescents
Approach to EiA

Early + Continuous + Responsible = EiA impact
Early Engagement

**EHPISA**
- Design to address relevant evidence gaps
- Responsive to policy windows and opportunities
- “Well-positioned” researchers
- Clearly articulated EiA objectives in line with evidence to be produced
- EiA reporting requirement

**Researcher**
- Study design to address relevant evidence gaps at country level
- Identify key stakeholders and what change is required
- Develop and implement SEPs and report on progress
Continuous Engagement

- Facilitate engagement between academics and evidence users throughout the programme
  - Technical fora
  - Regional symposia
  - Advisory board
  - Fellowships
  - Communication and KM
  - Tracking and learning

- Be responsive to engagement opportunities
- Monitor and leverage policy, programming and practice windows
- Engagement throughout the study timeframe (encouraged by the reporting requirement)
Responsible Engagement

**EHP-SA**
- Good quality research is a priority
- Renowned academics – lead organization in the Global South
- Timing of engagement modalities linked to stages of research
- Linking EHP-SA evidence into the wider body of knowledge

**Researcher**
- Leverage evidence generated along the research continuum with EiA tactics
  - Literature review
  - Protocol
  - Data tools
  - Preliminary findings
  - Final analysis
  - Peer review and publication (high impact & open source)
Towards EiA impact

**NPM**
- EHPSA researchers requested to convene TWG to collect evidence to develop policy on PrEP

**UN**
- EHPSA research models informing concept notes for regional programming

**Academia**
- Participation in academic alliance inform regional HIV research agendas

**Donors**
- EHPSA research models replicated in study design of large upcoming RCT studies

**LPM**
- Research models scaled up by government beyond research sites

Evidence based PrEP policy
Coordinated regional response to AYFHS
Harmonised regional HIV prevention research agenda
Continued strengthening of evidence base
Sustained access to evidence based service delivery
The research continuum can be leveraged with EiA tactics - position for impact through engagement

• Capacity sharing for researchers and decision makers

• Implementation costs money – make costed realistic recommendations

• Evidence is just one piece of the puzzle

• Decision making is a political process - EiA is a political process

• EiA cannot be planned through a linear process

• It not possible to measure research impact during the limited lifespan of EHPSA

• Contribution vs attribution
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