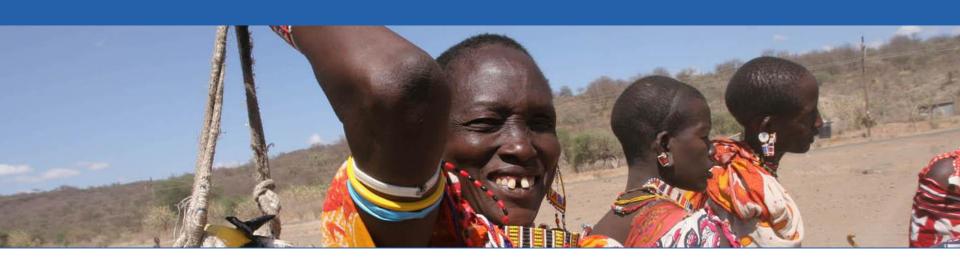
Translating research in practice-LCEDN's role

Practical Action





Knowledge approach



"The gift of materials goods make people dependent, but the gift of knowledge makes them **free**."

Small is Beautiful, E.F.Schumacher





- Start with the change we want to create
- Focus on uptake and practical implications
- Stakeholder communication preferences
- Use and update existing understanding
- Dissemination to encourage uptake
- Systems thinking we will not create impact at scale alone

Recognised challenges



- Defining specific gaps is challenging. It is common that broad areas of unknown are discussed- reaching the granular level is difficult
- Common definitions across geographies are rare: "knowledge", "research", "academia"
- An obsession with new research
- Difficult to track, and value incremental impact
- Possibility of a confirmation bias how do we validate needs?
- Dissemination is a luxury
- Multi stakeholder approaches are not necessarily the most appropriate- how do we best identify user groups?

Reflections



- It is essential to recognise the importance of brokering skills
- It is critical to define key terms earlier in assignments
- It is essential to strike a balance between consultation and informing AND being listening and responding
- It is important to recognise, and mitigate the power dynamics in decision-making
- Lack of access to research is still an issue

Working in partnership



"There is need for an agency like Practical Action to link the academia and County Governments" Kisii Country Government Official, Kenya

- How can organisations and institutions complement one another?
- How can organisations and institutions work together effectively?
- Why is there a need? What is currently missing?



What role can LCEDN play?



Key recommendations:



- Research should be demand-led
- Early stakeholder engagement is a key activity to order to map demands, and call for new research.
- Engaging with users, across sectors, is an excellent way of bringing multiple views and perspectives to the table.
- Verify chosen issues/demands beyond academia, and seek collaborations with NGO or private sector practitioners on the ground, and situate needs within specific contexts and reality.
- Have a broker partner tasked and resourced to contextualise knowledge
- Use existing knowledge from outside of academia, establish core relationships beyond academia to tease this out.
- Plan for uptake in as much detail as possible at the start

On an individual level:



- Advocate for early stakeholder engagement across the network, and the wider community (especially funders).
- Work with brokers- what role can NGOs like Practical Action play?
- Actively share successful engagement activities, and the methodologies used.
- Document, and demonstrate what works and what doesn't work.
- Actively document evidence of success and uptake
- Be sensitive to information overload, support practitioners to access research and navigate through libraries and repositories
- Be challenging and creative

As a collective:



- Use existing and planned LCEDN activities to explore identified research needs.
- Use these events to explore knowledge gaps which have not been chosen for new research, capture the outcomes and share with the network
- LCEDN can gather evidence and success cases to influence donors to fund this type of work
- LCEDN to advocate for dissemination and uptake activities and to make it a priority criteria in proposals.
- As a body continue to be a model of good practice
- Gather evidence of uptake

A way forwards ...



- What role should LCEDN play in order to bridge the gap between research and practice?
- How can a global network be utilised to contextualise knowledge and understand different demands?
- How can research match the needs of end-users?

Opportunity vs pipe dream ??



