

TWO WORLDS DIVIDED

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN RESEARCH AND POLICY



RESEARCHERS

“It’s publish or perish in our environment. We are not expert at communicating beyond the academy.”

Challenges:

Researchers are often not well connected to policy-makers

It is difficult to reconcile the timeframes and processes for research and decision making

Values and reward systems differ between the two groups

Researchers may not be expert in communicating to policy-makers

Results obtained might be politically sensitive

RESEARCH ON HOW TO MOVE EVIDENCE INTO ACTION SHOWS RESEARCHERS AND POLICY-MAKERS ARE

DIVIDED

BY A NUMBER OF FACTORS.



POLICY-MAKERS

“Decisions are political. Evidence is only one factor.”

Challenges:

In resource-poor settings, climate change may not be top of the political agenda

Local and national government works through rigid administrative systems and hierarchies

Policies are not made based solely on scientific evidence. Political and economic context play a significant role

Policy-makers might not be able to access the evidence in an appropriate format

There are mixed messages on these issues

THE RESEARCHERS INVOLVED IN THE TDR/IDRC PROJECTS ARE TRYING TO

BRIDGE

THIS DIVIDE USING A NUMBER OF MODALITIES.



Dialogue spaces

- Inputs from policy-makers and communities were incorporated in planning
- Data sharing and feedback sessions have been held
- Policymakers have been taken on study tours
- Community dialogue sessions were undertaken



Working with and through government

- Some project researchers were already working in national health institutions
- Authorities have been made aware of the project and its aims and benefits from the outset
- Researchers participate in government technical working groups
- Researchers have worked to understand policy-makers’ priorities and to find common ground



Communication strategy

- Examples of communication avenues include:
- Meetings and conferences
 - Policy briefs and technical reports
 - Website and social media
 - Emails and electronic newsletters
 - Working with media
 - Study tours and field trips

Through the life of this project, efforts to move evidence into action, in both the political and community spheres, have been supported and documented. Evidence into action news is shared through the newsletter and the website. Lessons and best practice for communicating evidence are being collated in a guide for researchers.

SEE MORE AT:
www.vbd-environment.org