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

POLICY-MAKERS
Decisions are political. Evidence is only one factor.

Challenges:
Decisions are political. Evidence is only one factor.
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

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

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