Pathways to Research Impact Guide

SVRI Sexual Violence Research Initiative
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Introduction to the Guide

Violence against women and violence against children are two of the most pressing human rights and public health problems of our time. These are complex, deeply troubling and at times personal areas of work. The research and evidence you generate as a researcher in this space is inherently political and politicised. Creating change in this context can be slow, and careful work is needed that is dependent on collaboration within and across sectors. The intention of the course, and of this accompanying guide, is to provide insights into how you, as an influencer of change through research, can work strategically and with the right stakeholders and collaborators, to ensure your research is known and used.

Over the 4 modules of the Pathways to Research Impact (PTRI) course, summarised in this guide, we have explored the key concepts to be cognizant of when working to enable research use, uptake and impact. In Core module 1 we explored why you do what you do, and how to lead and influence change as a researcher. With Core module 2, we take a closer look at the evidence ecosystem and ways to position yourself within this system. In Core module 3, the focus is on building and maintaining genuine relationships and partnerships with stakeholders and collaborators. And finally, with Core module 4 we explore how to monitor and evaluate your own efforts to improve the uptake, use and impact of your research. The Planning Tool that is included as a resource in the online course is our strategy to encourage knowledge transfer.

We hope you find this guide useful as you continue your important work.
Module 1: Leading and influencing change

Many researchers have a strong sense of ‘why they do what they do’. They are clear that their role as a researcher includes helping to make a positive difference to society. For researchers focused on understanding, addressing, and eliminating violence against women and violence against children, the need to support meaningful change could not be more important, or more urgent. Your research will reach its full potential for usefulness only when thoughtful, intentional, and targeted efforts are made.

Researchers are just one part of a complex system. But knowing what you can do, and what is possible for you given your strengths, your context, and your environment is crucial to embarking on this journey of enhancing your capacity to lead and facilitate change within the systems you seek to influence.

1.1 Facilitating research uptake, research use and research impact

Throughout this guide we use the terms: research uptake, research use, and research impact. We will use these terms to refer to three distinct processes.

**Research uptake:** is the process of people becoming aware of, and interested in, your research. Think about this as what you do to attract positive attention to your research and build interest in the research evidence you are generating.

**Research use:** is what people do with your research. After you have their attention and they are interested, what will people do with the research evidence you generate?

**Research impact:** is the difference your research makes. What change has resulted? What outcomes have been realised for the individual, family, community, society, or system?

The kind of action we take as researchers depends on what goal we have. Having clear goals and plans for how to achieve them will help you translate your intentions into action. Table 1, outlines some goals researchers might commonly have and some strategies that will increase the likelihood of those goal being achieved.
Table 1. Strategies for achieving your research goal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Goal</th>
<th>Useful strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research uptake:</strong> To build awareness of, and interest in your research</td>
<td>• Evidence collation  - Evidence synthesis - Dissemination of evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Use:</strong> To facilitate others to use your research in policies or practices</td>
<td>• Building relationships with potential research users - Brokerage - Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Impact:</strong> To make a difference by facilitating real and lasting change through your research</td>
<td>• Advocacy  - Research co-creation and collaboration - Supporting the development and sustainment of evidence-based practice - Facilitating the scale up and spread of effective programs/policies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.2 Research uptake, use and impact in policy

Policy is influenced by a wide range of factors including political ideology and priorities, the economic climate, stakeholder interests and public opinion. Research evidence is not, nor should it be, the chief determinant of policy development. Instead, it is more realistic to strive for Evidence-Informed Decision Making in the policy sphere.

**Evidence Informed Decision Making (EIDM)** draws on the best available research evidence, content and context expertise and stakeholder values and preferences.

**Guidance for stimulating uptake, use and impact of your research in policy settings**

A systematic review of how to influence policy makers provides the following advice:

- Do high quality research
- Make your research relevant and readable
- Understand policy processes
- Be accessible to policy makers by engaging with them routinely, flexibly, and humbly
- Decide if you will be an issue advocate or a knowledge broker
- Build relationships and ground rules with policymakers
- Be entrepreneurial, or partner with someone who is
- Reflect continuously on whether you should engage, whether you want to, and whether your engagement is working

When working in low and middle income countries settings it is also important to consider:

- National or global reputational risks,
- Policy advances are often linked with broader social movements
- Policy development processes can lack transparency and order
- Distrust of evidence (particularly from high income countries)
1.3 Research uptake, use and impact in practice settings

**Practice settings** in this context are any settings that offer and deliver programs or services directly to people who are affected by, or at risk of, violence against women and violence against children.

The rate at which research evidence impacts practice is highly variable. There is often a gap between what we know works, and what is being done in routine practice. This is called the “**knowledge-practice**” gap or the “**know-do**” gap.

This gap can work both ways: i.e., practice can fail to keep up with research evidence, while researchers can lag in their understanding of real-world evidence needs and priorities, leading them to conduct research of limited relevance.

This gap is an urgent problem - people cannot benefit from what they do not receive. There is an ethical responsibility for programs and services to use evidence to drive:

- Effectiveness and impact for those being served
- Equity of access to quality programs and services
- Transparency and accountability to outcomes

Successful research impact is demonstrated when evidence-informed practice becomes embedded in ‘business as usual’, meaning that:

- the evidence-informed practice is being used as intended
- practices are not going back to the old ways of doing things
- practices achieve the intended outcomes for the intended target population

As with evidence-informed decision-making for policy, evidence-informed practice is the integration of the best available research evidence with practice expertise and service user values and preferences.

**Implementation Science** is the study of methods and strategies to promote the uptake of evidence-informed practices into ‘business as usual’ in order to improve the quality and effectiveness of services³. Researchers can help with the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ of implementation science.
Table 2. How you can support the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ of how implementing evidence in practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The ‘what’ - Enhancing the ‘implementability’ of evidence-informed practices in a specific setting</th>
<th>The ‘how’ - Supporting the uptake, embedding and scale-up of evidence-informed practices in a specific setting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Seek to develop or test practices that are ‘implementable’ that is:  
  • Acceptable to key stakeholders  
  • Appropriate solutions to the issue at hand  
  • Feasible to put in place | Support practice implementation by:  
  • Providing training in a new practice or process  
  • Providing post-training support (e.g., coaching or troubleshooting)  
  • Building the capacity of leaders within the service organisation |
| Employing user-centred designs is a useful method for gaining insights into ‘implementability’ from the outset – consider utilising co-design and co-creation to achieve this. | Intermediary organisations, which work between different parts of the system (e.g., research and policy or practice), can be a useful resource for supporting the implementation of evidence-based practices. |

Putting this into practice: Go to Section One of the Pathways to Research Impact planning tool to start thinking through your goal/s for your research (uptake, use or impact) and the factors within your context that might influence your ability to achieve it.

Module 2: The evidence ecosystem and your research impact

2.1 Research evidence uptake, use and impact from a systems perspective

The causes of violence against women and violence against children, and the solutions, are complex and multifaceted. It is worth taking time to reflect on these causes and potential solutions, together with organisations, communities, countries, and funders within the wider movement working to address these problems. Think about where you fit within this wider movement, which aspects of it relate to your work and the external factors that play a role in the uptake, use and impact of your research.

The decision-making structures that relate to violence against women and violence against children include multiple processes and levels. There are individual-and community-level decisions. There are also local-, provincial-, national-, and even international-level decision-making structures.

In addition, women- and child-centred decisions require multiple sectors to be involved, including education, social welfare, police, health, and others. While it is not feasible to coordinate or communicate with this whole community, the better you understand the various players and the
stronger your relationships are with them, the more likely you are to make a meaningful difference with your research.

Policy and practice decision making is also complex. Decisions are not one-off acts but part of an ongoing cycle of change, review, and further decisions. Research has a role to play at every step of the decision-making cycle.

Figure 1 depicts the decision-making cycle.

2.2 Research evidence uptake, use and impact from a systems perspective

An evidence ecosystem has been defined as: A system reflecting the formal and informal linkages and interactions between different actors (and their capacities and resources) involved in the production, translation, and use of evidence. This is an increasingly common way of describing the wider environment in which we work, using systems thinking to support the uptake, use, and impact of research evidence.

For you to be most effective in your efforts, it is important that you understand the main components of the evidence ecosystem that you are part of. Where do you sit within it, and what is your role? As shown in Figure 2, the evidence ecosystem can be conceptualised as consisting of four layers of individual and organisational actors involved in contributing to cycles of research use. Individuals may work across more than one layer\textsuperscript{4,5}. 
Ultimately, the continuous exchange and interaction between these systems should help to create a research-informed service system. This service system is also continuously providing practice-based feedback and insights to the other layers of this ecosystem, such that the production of new research can be triggered, or activities in the research support system can be adjusted. This last point is quite important and is highlighted through the multiple arrows connecting all layers of the evidence ecosystem and indicating the inter-relationships.

2.3 Approaches to research uptake, use and impact

Systems and the people, organisations, and cultures within them, vary considerably. In the field of violence against women and violence against children, government bodies, academia, the broader research sector, activists, and citizen groups all have well-established structures and processes for how they operate, and they each bring their own depth of understanding and consolidated knowledge to the field.

Even within the evidence ecosystem, key differences often emerge in the way those from different disciplines, training approaches and cultures communicate and think.

These differences can create barriers for evidence use, uptake and impact. And therefore, necessitates the planned and intentional use of strategies to enable the increased use of research findings. The Framework for “Mobilising” Research Knowledge into policy and practice\(^6\) (Table 3) outlines the key methods of promoting research uptake, use and impact. All of these processes (except for A - Knowledge Production) are active strategies, requiring relationships with research users.
Table 3. Key methods for promoting research uptake, use and impact

| Framework for “Mobilising” Research Knowledge into policy and practice | 
|---|---|
| **A – Knowledge Production** | Producing Research-based knowledge ‘products’ including the research outputs themselves, but also publishing or creating summaries of your work (eg research summaries, web portals, collation and synthesis) and dissemination (eg – publications, conference presentations) |
| **B – Brokering – Own Research** | Brokering: Interactive ‘spaces’ where knowledge can be exchanged, integrated and/or transformed: Dissemination, training and education, interaction. Using own or wider research |
| **C – Brokering – Wider Research** | Advocating for use of evidence Promoting for a greater role for research-based knowledge through changes in infrastructure, organisation or culture: Training, interaction, social influence, incentives, reinforcements |
| **D – Advocating for the Use of Evidence** | Facilitating implementation of evidence by assisting with change management processes |
| **E - Research INTO practice (implementation)** | Research and implementation done simultaneously with stakeholders – co-produced research knowledge: Using relationship and systems models |
| **F - Researching IN practice (co-production)** | Create develop or mould collaborations and network that shape and share expertise: Emphasis on explicit knowledge but attention paid to tacit knowledge within organisations |
| **G - Fostering networks – new or existing** | Research to refine the field by building shared understanding Application of ‘knowledge about knowing |
| **H – Advancing the field of knowledge mobilisation** |

Reflect on which of these strategies you have used previously and which you might like to develop skills in going forward.

2.4 Working at the interface of research and decision-making

Violence against women and violence against children is an interdisciplinary and complex field. Agencies and organizations producing and using research in their decision-making come from
different service sectors including law enforcement authorities, criminal justice institutions, and victim services. All of these sectors have different cultures, norms and values, as does academia or advocacy. While they may be unified in their ambition to prevent violence, each of these are pursuing different missions.

Research suggests that staff in many of the agencies making policy and practice decisions do not use academic journals or universities as key sources of research knowledge. Instead, they list other organisations in their local or broader professional networks, national agencies, or governmental entities whose mission touches on theirs as key evidence sources. This again highlights the importance of using relational strategies when you collaborate with stakeholders to enhance research uptake, use and impact. To the degree possible, you should consider working to become part of professional networks and to become a trusted source of evidence and information that stakeholders can rely on.

**Putting this into practice:** Go to Section Two of your Pathways to Research Impact planning tool to work through the process of mapping the evidence ecosystem that you are working within. You may also begin to reflect on the strategies you have previously used to facilitate the uptake, use and impact of research in your evidence ecosystem. What worked? What did not? And what might you try going forward?

**Module 3: Stakeholder engagement and partnerships**

3.1 Stakeholder engagement – An introduction

Stakeholders are defined as those who have a vested interest in the outcome of a research project. As shown in Table 4, there are a wide range of types of stakeholders that could be involved in work to enhance the uptake, use and impact of research on violence against women and violence against children. The wider public can also be important to consider.

**Table 4. Stakeholder types relevant to violence against women and violence against children**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Frontline Services</th>
<th>End-users</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Funders</td>
<td>Agencies Coalition Interest groups Media NGOs</td>
<td>Administrators Evaluators Finance depts HR depts Management Research staff Specialists Senior leaders</td>
<td>Community workers Educators Healthcare staff Pedagogues Police Psychologists Social workers</td>
<td>Women Children Families Clients Patients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislators</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politicians</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy developers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy advocates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Stakeholder engagement** is an important facilitator of research uptake, use and impact. It can be defined in two ways. First, as “the practices that researchers/research organisations undertake to involve stakeholders in a positive manner in research/research uptake activities.” Second, as the “ongoing and evolving involvement of stakeholders beyond stakeholder analysis, at every
stage of the research project cycle ". Thus, you can engage with stakeholders at different stages of your research process or throughout the entire process. Table 5 outlines the different purposes of stakeholder engagement.

**Table 5. Stakeholder engagement and its purposes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moral</th>
<th>Strategic</th>
<th>Pragmatic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To ensure equitable representation of different perspectives</td>
<td>To enhance research uptake quality and performance</td>
<td>To enable context-dependent problem-solving and decision-making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To create trust</td>
<td>To build reputation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To give voice/ empower</td>
<td>To manage/ navigate risks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To enhance research legitimacy</td>
<td>To create knowledge/ enable learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.2 Engaging stakeholders for research uptake – Challenges and strategies

In order for stakeholders to use research evidence in their work, three things need to be in place. They need to: 1) be capable of using evidence (able to access and understand it); 2) be motivated to use evidence (see that it adds value to their work); and 3) have the opportunity to use evidence. Publishing your research in peer-reviewed journals is unlikely to be enough to prompt research uptake, use and impact. Instead, you can think creatively, and engage consistently with stakeholders, employing key mechanisms (as shown in Table 6) to help to create the conditions where research uptake happens.

**Table 6. Engagement Strategies to change stakeholder behaviour and increase research uptake**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mechanism</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Awareness</strong></td>
<td>Build awareness for, and positive attitudes toward Research Uptake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agreement</strong></td>
<td>Build mutual understanding and agreement on policy-relevant questions and the research findings needed to answer them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication &amp; access</strong></td>
<td>Communicate and provide access to research findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interact</strong></td>
<td>Interact with decision-makers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skills</strong></td>
<td>Support decision-makers to develop skills in accessing and making sense of research findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure &amp; Process</strong></td>
<td>Influence the structures and processes involved in decision-making to enable better use of research findings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In your work, you may engage with stakeholders working in both policy and practice settings. The strategies that you might use to enhance the uptake, use and impact of research amongst these groups will likely be different.

Table 7 outlines stakeholder engagement strategies to trigger research uptake best suited to a practice context. A summary of stakeholder engagement strategies that may be useful for supporting research uptake in policy settings are listed in Module 1.2\textsuperscript{11}.

**Table 7. Stakeholder engagement strategies to trigger mechanisms – practice focus\textsuperscript{12}**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice Focus Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Co-Production/ “User-centred design” of interventions, their implementation and evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Training, professional development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Audit &amp; Feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use learning collaboratives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promoting and supporting champions, opinion leaders, formal leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Form and support implementation teams, advisory boards, steering committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Facilitate networking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enable site-based knowledge exchange</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.3 From stakeholder engagement to partnership

**Integrated knowledge translation (IKT)** is an intensive form of research partnership, where research users (including policy makers, practitioners, industry and the public) are involved in all stages of a research process, from shaping the research questions and deciding on methodology through to interpreting findings and disseminating results. By collaborating in this way, IKT aims to create research that is relevant to practice and policy from the beginning – by asking meaningful questions and generating findings that are applicable in the knowledge users’ setting. IKT is also thought to facilitate uptake of research findings by engaging research users in the dissemination process. The final major benefits often cited for IKT are increased understanding among both researchers and research users of each other’s interests and needs, and benefits emerging from the relationships and connections that are often built while collaborating\textsuperscript{13}.

IKT can occur in several forms. It may be mandated (e.g., by funder), voluntary (researchers and research users share IKT as a value) or institutionalised (e.g., Community-Academic Partnerships; Research-Policy partnerships; Embedded Researchers in government organisations).

**Useful resource:** What capacities are needed to support IKT?\textsuperscript{14}
Addressing power differentials in community stakeholder engagement

A power differential exists, when individuals or groups involved in research activities experience that some participate in these activities with greater authority, agency, or resources than others. Power differentials can occur in a range of partnerships including community/stakeholder partnerships. It is important to be aware of and address these. Key questions to reflect on to understand potential frictions in your group include:

1. Where is decision-making power located among your stakeholders?
2. Where is there a lack of such decision-making power? and
3. What are potential blind spots that you may have?

These questions will bring you back to stakeholder analysis. You may want to ask yourself, and others, how formal authority, resources, and other assets are distributed among your stakeholders, including knowledge. Ways to try to balance your stakeholder collaboration despite existing friction include:

- actively facilitating your collaboration with stakeholders,
- intentionally and purposely involving and engaging collaborators and supporting them so they can become active collaborators,
- composing your group of collaborators such that no one feels outnumbered, and
- building and nurturing relationships through informal interactions and exchanges— with all your stakeholders.

You as a researcher will likely also be aware of power imbalances that exist between you and the policy stakeholders, including funders, whom you are trying to target and convince of the value of using research. These can be challenging to change, and researchers may need to adapt their ways of working to align or to influence the institutions in government with which they engage.

Read more: Let’s avoid re-inventing the wheel

3.4 Evaluating stakeholder engagement

Research suggests that while there has been an increase in efforts to engage stakeholders in research, these efforts are rarely evaluated. There is clear scope to further build the evidence base in this area. Four common design flaws have been noted in existing evaluations of stakeholder engagement:

- Failure to clearly define the purpose of the stakeholder engagement.
- Failure to clearly define intended outcomes of stakeholder engagement
- Despite its usefulness as a tool, theory is rarely used in the planning stage.
- Lack of proper consideration of the context in which stakeholders operate.

COM-B is a theory you can use to describe the behavioural pre-conditions and mechanisms you want to target when working with stakeholders.

A critical step in evaluating the usefulness of stakeholder engagement on research uptake, use and impact is measuring what impact it has had. Table 9 outlines suggestions regarding potential measures.
Table 8. What to measure when assessing the influence of community stakeholder engagement on research uptake?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What to measure?</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do research outputs emphasise insights and findings most relevant to the community?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How community-oriented and -driven is the dissemination of research findings?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Are dissemination activities targeting community?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do community partners serve as champions for the research?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Are there other clear “community footprints” in the dissemination work (e.g., are community partners co-authors on papers, lead- or co-presenters in meetings)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has the uptake of research findings been accelerated because stakeholders engaged in the project actively promoted this uptake?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can we observe any changes in local priorities, policies or in use of local resources to which the research has contributed?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can we observe any changes in local practices to which the research has contributed?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To measure stakeholder engagement, you may wish to utilize The Research Engagement Survey Tool (REST) – 9 item condensed version18.

**Putting this into practice:** Go to Section Three of your Pathways to Research Impact planning tool to work through the process of mapping your stakeholders and planning your stakeholder engagement strategies for each group.
Module 4: Monitoring and evaluating your change efforts

4.1 So what? The importance of monitoring and evaluating your change efforts

There is not yet a strong evidence base for what works for enhancing research uptake, use and impact, but it is vital to continue to strive towards best practice. Your research uptake, use and impact strategies should be subject to evaluation so you can: 1) learn what works; 2) do more of what works; and 3) stop doing what doesn’t work, as to avoid wasting time and resources.

Throughout this course, you have been developing your plan for how you will lead and influence change in your field. Planning for monitoring and evaluation of your change efforts is an essential part of this process.

For an example of a methodological framework for evaluating research impact, see Evaluating impact from research: A methodological framework

4.2 Outcomes and measurement for research uptake, use and impact

Developing and documenting measurable outcomes for your change effort is essential for tracking your progress and evaluating your work. The outcomes you should measure depend on your goal: what does success look like? When evaluating something we often think about this in terms of outcomes and indicators.

An outcome: is the benefit, or benefits, that a project or intervention is intended to deliver

An indicator: is the quantitative or qualitative measurement, statistic or insight that shows whether change has happened. As shown in Table 9 potential outcomes of interest are different for research uptake, use and impact. Table 10 shows the indicators you might use to measure research use outcomes.
### Table 9. Outcomes: Research uptake, use and impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research uptake</th>
<th>Research use</th>
<th>Research impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accessibility</strong> of the research evidence</td>
<td><strong>Instrumental use</strong>: research evidence directly influences decisions</td>
<td>Impact outcomes specific to the project goal: For e.g., improved school attendance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relevance &amp; usability</strong> of the research evidence</td>
<td><strong>Conceptual use</strong>: research evidence provides new ideas or perspectives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appetite</strong> for research evidence</td>
<td><strong>Tactical use</strong>: research evidence used to justify a position or lobby for changes</td>
<td>Impact outcomes related to changing cultures of evidence use: For e.g., Strengthened capacity for evidence use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Imposed use</strong>: research evidence is required to meet standards / criteria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 10. Example – Research use outcomes and potential indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible outcomes of interest</th>
<th>Possible indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Instrumental use**: research evidence directly influences decisions | • Citation of research in NGO program documents  
  • Evidence-based intervention strategies described and operationalised in manuals and training  
  • De-investment in programs that do not align with the evidence |
| **Conceptual use**: research evidence provides new ideas or perspectives | • Changes in knowledge, attitudes and beliefs about an issue and/or how to address is |
| **Tactical use**: research evidence used to justify a position or lobby for changes | • Citation or summary of research in NGO funding submissions  
  • Mention of research findings in speeches to stakeholders, funders  
  • Number of advocacy actions/events that promote change in line with research findings |
| **Imposed use**: research evidence is required to meet standards / criteria | • Use of research evidence is mentioned as a requirement in funding guidelines  
  • Evidence-based practice change is mandated by an organisation |

When considering outcome measurement, it can be useful to differentiate between your **spheres of control, influence, and interest**. For more information on conceptualising research outcomes and impact\(^2\).
4.3 Detailed planning for your monitoring and evaluation

There are a number of tools that can help you to develop a detailed plan for monitoring and evaluating your efforts to drive research uptake, research use, and research impact, with program logics (see Figure 3) being a key tool. Indeed, if your research involves developing and evaluating a program or intervention, it can help to develop two program logics—one for the intervention being evaluated and another to guide monitoring and evaluation of the activities and outputs you are using to try to drive research uptake, use and impact.

Remember that we have been using the terms research uptake, research use, and research impact to mean different things. We suggest grouping your intended outcomes into those related to research uptake and research use. We also suggest specifying the stakeholder outcomes you’re seeking. These will be important process outcomes to set you on your way. As shown in Figure 3, research impacts are separated out as the ultimate, long-term goal. By doing so, we again highlight that it is possible to create pathways to research impact. Note that real impact is likely unattainable unless research uptake and research use are already evident.

Figure 3. Basic structure of a program logic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inputs</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Research Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

If program logics are new to you, we encourage you to familiarise yourself with what they are and their benefits. We recommend the guidance and training video developed by the Australian Institute of Family Studies.

The best way to check whether your specified outcomes are measurable is to start planning for how exactly you would measure change for each. It can help to develop a measurement matrix (see Table 11). This is a planning approach commonly used by evaluators. For each outcome, it prompts you to specify an indicator, or multiple indicators, that you will use to assess whether the outcome has been achieved, or progress is being made. Then it prompts you to get even more detailed by specifying the source for the data, and the methods you will use for extracting the data or collecting the data, including who will do it and when.
Table 11. Developing a measurement matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Indicator(s)</th>
<th>Data source(s)</th>
<th>Measurement / extraction methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practice change: Improved mental health screening rates for victim survivors</td>
<td>% clients who complete mental health screening tool</td>
<td>Case files</td>
<td>Practice Nurse audits case files at end of every month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy change: Provision of free mental health screening for victim survivors becomes government policy</td>
<td>Policy presence (addition of new policy) Or Increased policy intensity (policy becomes stricter)</td>
<td>Policy documentation</td>
<td>Document review</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Program logics and measurement matrices are extremely useful tools, however, data and information is only useful when you do something with it. First, consider how you will actively monitor your outputs, outcomes and impact by planning how and when you will review and respond to the data. Set time aside periodically to consider what the data are telling you and how you will respond. Second, remember that you have an opportunity to share your learnings by contributing to the evidence base and building the capacity of others to do this kind of work. Consider whether you can publish from your research impact monitoring and evaluation data to contribute to the formal evidence base, and whether there are any capacity-building opportunities for other researchers in your institution or elsewhere.

*Putting this into practice:* Go to Section Four of your Pathways to Impact Planning Tool to work through the process of developing your program logic and measurement matrix.
5. Conclusion

Thank you for using the Pathways to Research Impact guide. It is our hope that this guide, and the course it accompanies, are helpful to you in your work and in developing your understanding of your role as a researcher within the complex violence against women and violence against children evidence ecosystem.

We hope this guide has helped you in thinking about how the Core Module content can be applied to your work as a researcher and to develop a plan for how to enhance the uptake, use and impact of your own research within your own context.

We also hope that the course has generated a broader interest in questions about research translation, transfer, uptake and use. If it has, there are ways to stay in touch all three organisations behind this course - SVRI, CEI and ACE - on LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook – please get in touch there.

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