tropEd Masters Programme in International Health

Get evidence into NGO practice and policy

Get NGO practice into research

- Barriers, Enablers and Supportive Tools for Health NGOs -

A thesis submitted to the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute, University of Basel as part of the tropEd Masters Programme in International Health

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Abbreviations

CBO	Community Based Organisation
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
EIDM	Evidence Informed Decision Making
ELRHA	Enhancing Learning & Research for Humanitarian Assistance
GFATM	The Global Fund To Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria
HSR	Health System Research
HQ	Headquarter
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
INTRAC	The International NGO Training and Research Centre
KFH	Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities of Applied Science
KFPE	Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
MMI	Network Medicus Mundi International Network
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPH	Master in Public Health
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
RAPID	Research and Policy in Development (from ODI)
RCT	Randomized Control Trial
RI	Research Institute
SDC	Swiss Development Cooperation
Swiss TPH	Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute
TDR	The Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
USAID	US Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organisation
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

Executive Summary

The overall objective of this thesis is to develop a framework for NGOs to better generate, access, share and use reliable evidence by identifying enablers, barriers, and supportive tools. To develop the framework, the analysis and findings were divided into three components: 1) Process of integrating research into NGO programming; 2) Translation of research findings into NGO practice and policy; 3) NGO – Research Institute (RI) collaborations. For the above three components, enablers, barriers and supportive tools were identified by using the following methods: 1) Literature Review; 2) Online Questionnaire; 3) Interviews with NGO and RI representatives.

The findings highlight key challenges for NGOs in all three analysed components, such as a lack of resources in regards to time, finance and expertise. At the same time, the need for research and the uptake of research findings is growing, and especially supported within larger NGOs by an increase in investments and institutional buy-in. Collaborations between NGOs and RIs are seen as beneficial for both sides (e.g. NGOs benefit from technical expertise on research methodology and implementation of rigorous research; RIs benefit from direct access to the field). However, they are challenged by different time lines, incentive structures, and working cultures.

For collaborations to be successful, sufficient time in building a relationship based on trust, respect, transparency and equity is seen as a necessary investment. Different tools and resources are available to NGOs to support them in collaborating with RIs, as well as in integrating research into their work and translating research findings into practice. However, the tools alone will not support the process, if there is not an enabling environment within NGOs and the process of doing research, translating research findings and collaborating with RIs is not institutionalized within the organisations. Although for now the different tools are available online, they are all scattered, making it difficult and very time-consuming for NGO employees to access the relevant supportive tools and available evidence. A toolbox attached to this thesis is a first step to collecting available tools on one platform. But the development of a comprehensive up-to-date platform with relevant and quality tools and resources will require large investments and commitments from the NGO and Donor Community.

1. Introduction

"We are in a hospital out-patient clinic in a sub-Saharan African country, where doctors are busy treating malaria cases. A prescription for chloroquine is given to a patient who complains that he has already taken the drug several times and it does not work. He asks for an alternative, but the doctor says that chloroquine is what is recommended and that it is the only medicine available. When research was initially proposed to assess the situation, there was strong resistance by the implementers: 'We are too busy and have no time for research.' Several months later, operational research (OR) conducted by a non-governmental organisation (NGO) proved that the patient was correct—chloroquine treatment had a 91% failure rate, and the drug was not effective for treating Plasmodium falciparum malaria. The lesson learnt was that the clinicians were busy with consultations, but actually giving useless medicine. In that context, OR helped us to be accountable to ourselves, our patients and our donors."

(Zachariah / Draquez 2012: 31)

The experience of a busy health clinic in Africa shows in a vivid way the need and relevance of integrating research into health programming and at the same time the difficulty in doing so. The thesis aims to approach this dilemma by identifying enablers and barriers for NGOs to integrate research into their work and to translate research findings into policy and practice.

At the same time, the thesis will offer recommendations that facilitate the integration of research into NGO programming and the use of existing research findings for practice and policy such as to draw on supportive tools (e.g. existing guidelines, checklists, databases) to create the necessary set up within NGOs to do so (e.g. research policy, budget and staff), as well as to develop collaborations with Research Institutes (RIs) that are beneficial for both sides.

1.1. Background

There is much ongoing discussion on how to embed research into decision making; i.e., by strengthening the relationship between researchers and policy-makers (WHO 2012). However, less is found on the role of NGOs in these processes which are very often the implementers of health programmes in different countries and are important stakeholders of the health system.

Civil society is mentioned as a shaper of public policy and important in dissemination of research evidence (cf. WHO 2012: 20). The prominent role civil society

and NGOs could play in research is very often not thoroughly explored, even though different papers published during recent years have highlighted the need to include NGOs into all "aspects of health research in order to maximize the potential benefits of research" (Delisle 2005: 1).

It is also acknowledged that the health system is complex and that "all relevant parties – researchers, decision-makers and other stakeholders, including civil society actors, work together..." so that decisions are "based on a solid foundation of evidence and benefit from a broad range of inputs" (WHO 2012: 12).

The need for NGOs to review their strategy of integrating and using research in international health programmes is observable for the following reasons:

1) Underutilization of research findings in policy-making, a lack of translating research into action, and the need to complete this "knowledge loop" (Delisle et al. 2005: 9).
2) Increased demand from different stakeholders to demonstrate results, impacts and evidence of international development programs. NGOs are in need "of reliable evidence on 'what works and what does not work'" in order to implement their health programs in a more rational, sustainable and accountable way (MMI Network 2009: 1).
3) Without evidence, NGOs are facing increased difficulties to access institutional donor funding and to justify the rationales of their projects[1].

In terms of responsibilities, the solution should not be a handover of duties to RIs in order to solve the knowledge loop and provide evidence of NGO programming. Instead, it is necessary to increase the contribution of NGOs to research for such reasons as the following:

[1]There are more and more calls for proposal by different donors that request a research component as well as collaboration with a research institute: for example, institutional donors such as DFID (https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-international-development), and the USAID Child Survival and Health Grants Program (http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/global-health/child-survival-and-health-grants-program); but also foundations and corporate donors such as UBS Optimus Foundation (http://www.ubs.com/global/en/wealth_management/optimusfoundation.html) and "The Children and Violence Evaluation Challenge Fund" (pooled funding initiative by three foundations, OAK, UBS Optimus and Bernard van Leer (www.evaluationchallenge.org))

- NGOs are essential stakeholders in a network of communities, researchers and policy-makers.
- NGOs are well-placed stakeholders for prioritizing topics ("shapers").
- NGOs have long-lasting experience in working in the respective context.
- NGOs are close to local needs and communities (e.g. to those being part of the system/ those who are needed for the research/ those who may benefit from research).
- NGOs play a central role in turning research outcomes into action and advocating for policy change: NGOs are "knowledge transfer brokers" (Delisle et al. 2005: 10).
- NGOs can build capacity of local experts in health research.

The narrow research perspective that is described by Delisle et al. (2005: 6) as "[…] producing new knowledge, with limited considerations of upstream operations (identification of research needs, questions and priorities), downstream actions (knowledge management, dissemination, translation) and the advocacy efforts required to connect research with policies, programs and training" is opening up. Although weak, links between NGOs and RIs exist (Delisle et al. 2005: 5), and there are different types and degrees of collaboration[2] (cf. INTRAC et al. 2012).

The need for stronger linkages is acknowledged by both parties: RIs recognise the comparative advantage of having an NGO as a partner for research; NGOs recognise the expertise and experience of RIs that can support them in the process of integrating rigorous research into their work. There are still many challenges to tackle for NGOs as well at possible NGO–Research Institute partnerships; for instance, the limited experience and capacities of many NGOs to integrate and use research, and differences between goals, time frames and work cultures of NGOs and RIs.

[2] In the thesis the term collaboration will be used to define any type of cooperation between an NGO and a Research Institute. The degree of collaboration may vary from very formal to informal.

1.2. **Definition of Research in the NGO context**

There are two main criteria for research[3] that are applicable to the NGO context:

1) Research has to be **relevant** for the work and goals of the NGO:

   Relevant research is linked to the problems NGOs are facing, to their needs to address technical and organisational challenges that hinder the delivery of accessible, equitable and quality health services especially at the community and district level (MMI Network 2009: 2).

2) Research questions are developed due to the challenges NGOs are facing in implementation; the questions are part of the NGO **operation**:

   Operational research relates to questions emerging from operational project implementation. Operational research includes primarily descriptive studies, cross-sectional studies, and cohort studies. Experimental studies (e.g. randomized control trials) are rarely done as they are complex and require additional resources such as time and funds (Zachariah et al. 2010: 2)[4].

Operational research can contribute to the following (Royston 2011):

- The identification of problems systematically, as well as searching for solutions.
- The choosing of appropriate interventions and finding the best combinations and delivery methods.
- The assessment of new interventions and the improvement of their design and delivery.
- The scale-up of interventions.

[3] The line between evaluation and research is blurry. It is a continuum from where evaluation ends and research starts. It mainly depends on the objective of the evaluation and the methods that are used. In general the main aim of evaluations (as well as reviews / audits) is to assess the output or outcome of provided services with the aim of improving them. Research is a systematic investigation to generate new evidence / knowledge and to draw general conclusions.

[4] There is however a trend in using more randomized control trials to measure the impact of programmes (e.g. Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, www.povertyactionlab.org). Randomized control trials work in the area of public health (e.g. testing of medical protocols), however for testing and measuring impact of more complex programmes, it is difficult to ensure the external validity of the findings.

- The assessment of the sustainability of health interventions in the context of the wider environment.
- The measurement and evaluation of the performance of projects and programmes.

An operational research project cycle usually includes the following steps as outlined in the figure below (WHO/ GFATM 2008: 4):

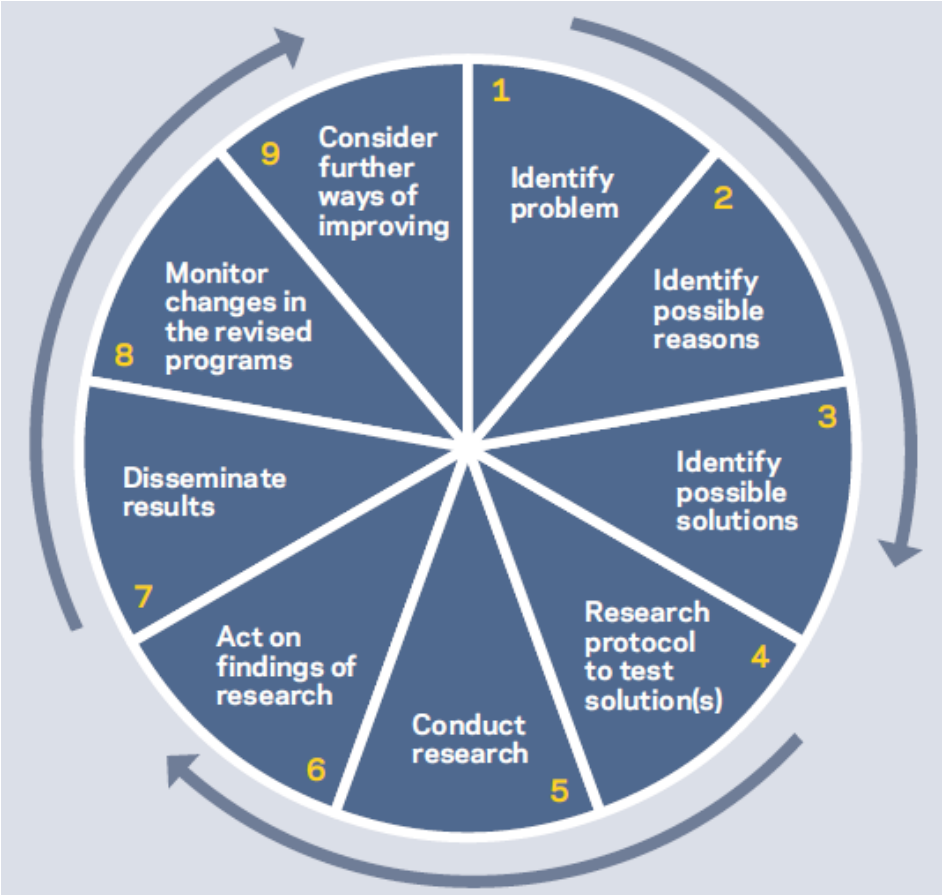


Figure 1: Operational Project Cycle

2. Research Question and Objectives

The research question and objectives of the thesis have been developed based on Medicus Mundi International (MMI)[5] Research Policy. The policy identifies the challenges for MMI Network Members as well as for many other NGOs to "Get evidence into NGO policy and practice" and to "Get NGO practice into research" (MMI Network 2009: 1). The aim of the MMI Working Group on Research[6] is to develop a set of tools for NGOs to conduct research and to access and translate existing research findings.

The objective of this thesis is linked to the problem statement of MMI's Research Policy as well as to the needs identified by the MMI Research Working Group and developed in collaboration with the group. The study results are relevant for NGOs that aim to integrate research into their programming as well as for NGOs that aim to use existing research findings to design their programmes and to advocate for policy changes. The thesis is a first step to identify preconditions and tools necessary for NGOs to get more evidence into their work and to use synergies between NGOs and RIs.

Overall Research Question:

How can NGOs generate, access, share and use reliable evidence?

General Objective:

The thesis aims to develop a framework for NGOs to better generate, access, share and use reliable evidence by identifying enablers, barriers, and facilitating tools.

Specific Objectives:

1. Process of integrating research:

1.1. To assess the status quo / experience of MMI Network Members with research / with RIs.

[5] Medicus Mundi International is a network of organisations working in the field of international health cooperation and advocacy (www.medicusmundi.org).

[6] See: http://www.medicusmundi.org/en/network-programs/mmi-program-health-systems-research-partnerships/ag

1.2. To identify and analyse the enablers and barriers for NGOs to integrate research into their work.

1.3. To identify tools and preconditions necessary for NGOs to facilitate the research process.

1.4. To determine existing tools, as well as tools that still need to be developed to facilitate research.

2. Translation and application of research findings into practice

2.1. To assess the status quo / experience of MMI Network Members to translate research findings into practice.

2.2. To identify and analyse enablers and barriers for NGOs to translate research findings into practice.

2.3. To identify tools and preconditions necessary for NGOs to facilitate the translation of research findings.

2.4. To determine existing tools, as well as tools that still need to be developed to facilitate the translation of research findings.

3. NGO–Research Institute collaborations

3.1. To identify challenges and enabling factors for NGO–Research Institute collaborations.

3.2. To identify tools facilitating NGOs-Research Institute collaborations.

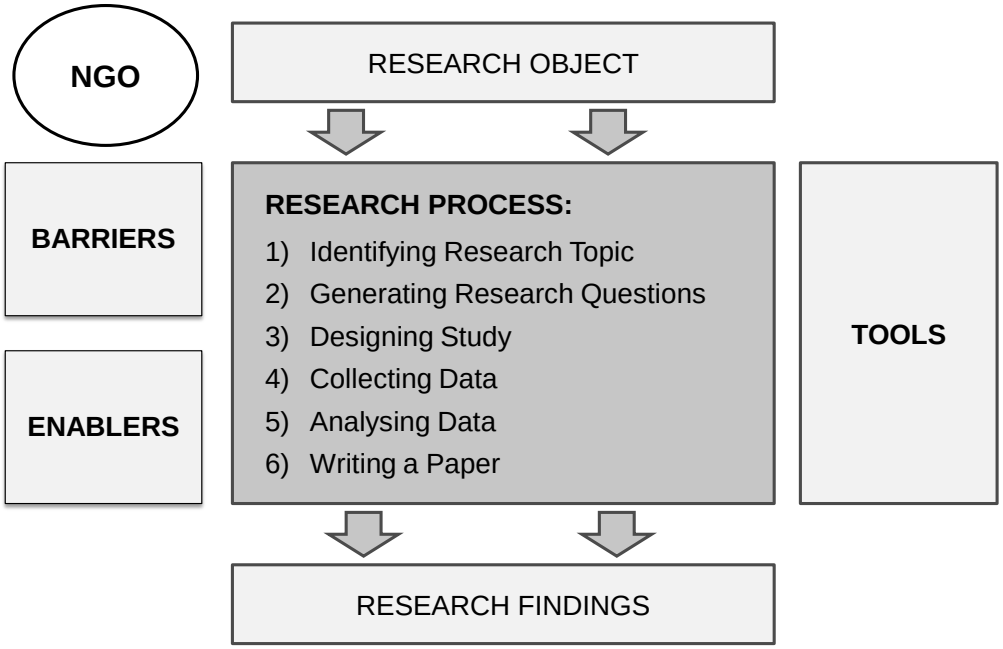
Framework of research question

The development of a framework for NGOs to better generate, access, share and use reliable evidence is based upon the following model:

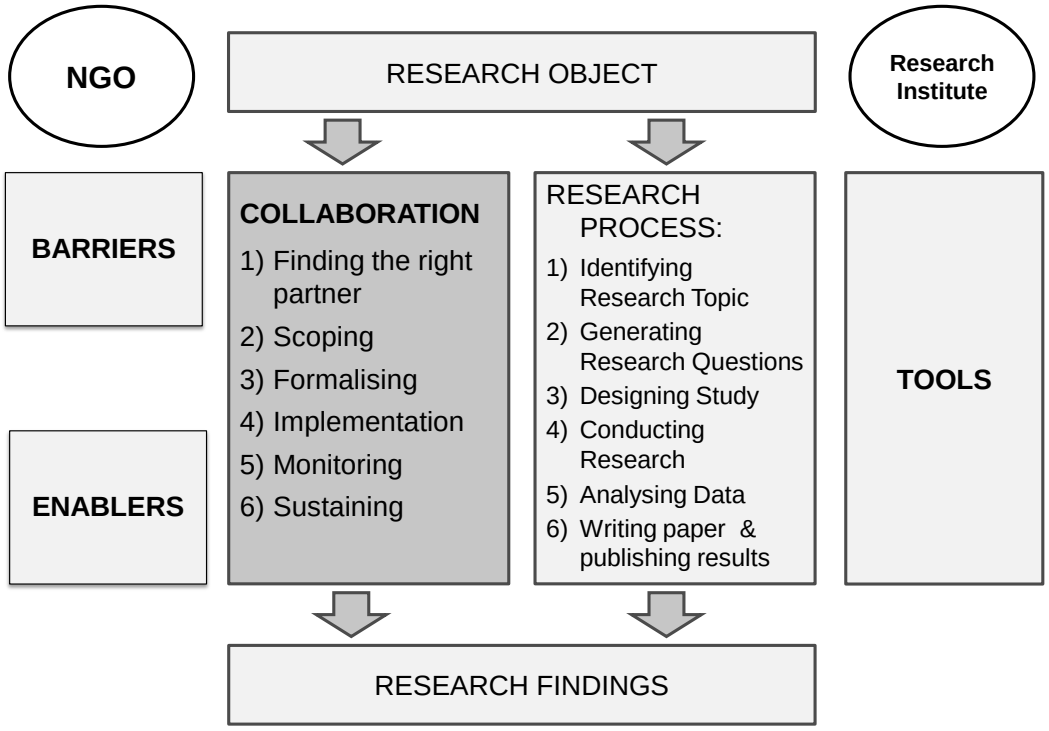
Figure 2: Framework for answering research question

A) Get NGO Practice into Research

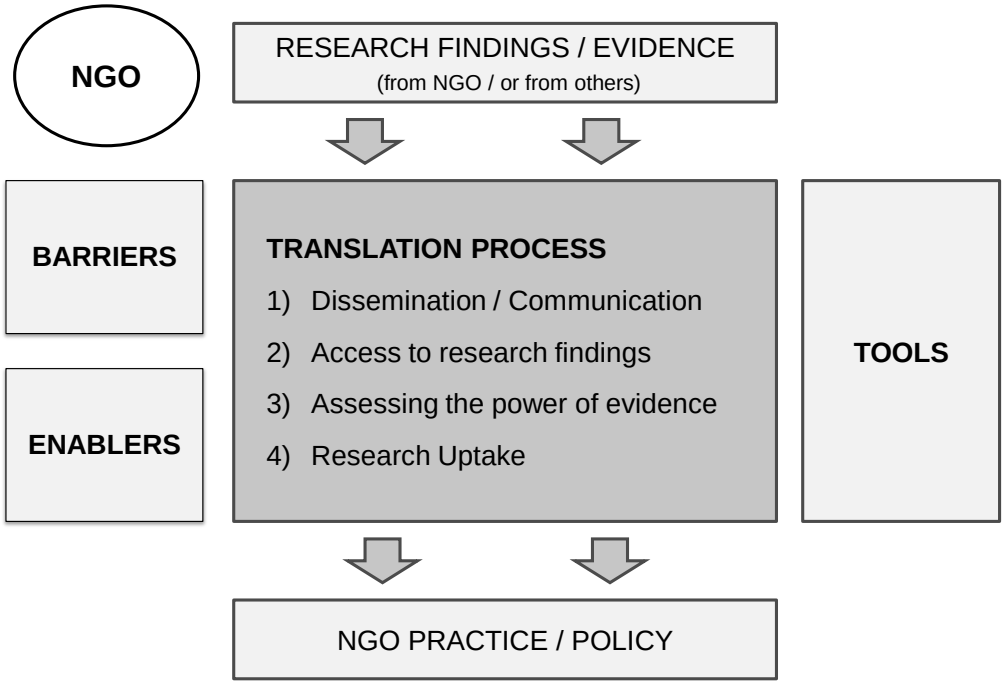
1. NGOs integrating research into their work - conducting research themselves



2. NGOs integrating research into their work - collaborating with Research Institute



B) Get Evidence into NGO Practice & Policy



There is a need to identify the enablers, barriers and tools as outlined in the model that support and hinder the generation of evidence and the translation of research findings into policy and practice.

3. Methodology

3.1. Literature Review

The aim of the literature review is to:

1) Review and summarize findings on enablers and barriers for NGOs to integrate research into their work and to translate research findings into policy and practice.
2) Identify existing tools needed to facilitate research within NGOs, to facilitate the translation of research findings, and to develop and implement NGO-Research Institute collaborations.
3) Analyse the status quo of NGO–Research Institute collaborations.

To obtain the information needed, internet search queries were set up based on the following key words: NGOs and Research, Research Partnerships/Collaborations, Health Research, Evidence–based programming and policy making. The queries included the search engines Google, Google scholar, the WHO website, and the database Pub Med.

3.2. Questionnaire

The aim of the internet-based questionnaires is to:

1) Evaluate the status quo and experience of NGOs integrating research and translating research findings into practice.
2) Gain information from NGOs on their perspective of enabling and hindering factors to conduct research and translate research findings into practice.
3) Receive input from NGOs on the appropriate tools needed to do research or to translate research findings into practise.
4) Learn from ongoing and previous NGO-Research Institute collaborations.
5) Identify benefits and pitfalls regarding the collaboration of NGOs with a Research Institute.

An internet-based questionnaire was developed (see Annex 2) with Flexiform 2.0 Software (University of Basel: 2005) to receive information on the above listed points from the MMI Network members. It is a questionnaire with logic containing in total 28 questions. The questionnaire was pilot tested by representatives of three different NGOs (five persons) and one RI (two persons). The questionnaire was also presented to the participants of the workshop of the MMI Working Group on Research in October 2012 in Amsterdam and feedback was received from the participants.

Based on the feedback received, the questionnaire was revised. Subsequently, the questionnaire was sent to 30 members of the MMI Network on November 27, 2012 with a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study and confirming the anonymity of the answers (see Annex 2). Non-responders received reminders by e-mail on December 13, 2012 and on January 7, 2013.

The answers to the questionnaires were analysed with Flexiform software, which allows for the direct development of graphs and tables. In addition, the data was transferred to Excel software and answers were coded where necessary. Necessary data analysis was done in Excel due to the simplicity of the analysis (mainly frequencies) and the small sample.

3.3. Analysis of Case Studies

Three types of case studies are presented in the thesis: 1) NGOs that integrate research into their work; 2) NGOs that translate research findings into NGO policy and practice; and 3) NGO-Research Institute collaborations. The aim of the case studies is to identify successful and inhibiting factors, to identify lessons learned, and to identify good practices for NGO–Research Institute collaborations.

1) Case study on NGO integration of research into their work

To identify how NGOs integrate research into their work, 13 NGOs and their approaches were analysed based on the following questions:

- How is research integrated into NGO programming?
- What are the preconditions for integrating research?
- What are the benefits and challenges?
- What are the lessons learned?

The information was collected through interviews with the involved persons at the NGOs as well as through participation and discussions during two workshops: 1) a workshop on NGOs and research by Medicus Mundi Switzerland in June 2012 in Basel, Switzerland; and 2) a workshop of the working group of Medicus Mundi International Network on research in October 2012, in Amsterdam, The Netherlands (see Annex 6). Additional documents were reviewed that were provided by the NGOs or were available on their website.

2) Case study on NGO translating research findings into NGO practice and policy

Here the focus was to identify the barriers and enablers for NGOs to translate research findings into their practice and policy. Also here, data was collected through interviews with primary persons involved within the NGOs, as well as through participation and discussions during two events in June 2013: 1) the SDC Research Fair in Bern, Switzerland (thematic workshop on "Getting research and innovation into policy and practice"); and 2) a Webinar organised by INTRAC on "Gathering and Using Evidence: Assessing the needs of practitioners" (see Annex 6).

3) Case study on NGO-Research Institute collaboration

To identify good-practice NGO-RI collaborations, partnerships between NGOs and RIs (three partnerships with feedback from both sides; 13 partnerships were only one side contributed) were analysed according to a pre-defined set of questions adapted from the framework that was used by the INTRAC research project on collaboration (Mdee 2012):

- What type of collaboration?
- How did the collaboration evolve?
- How was it designed?
- How was it implemented, and what were the results?
- What went well? What did not go so well?
- What were the lessons learned?

As above, data was collected by interviewing the main persons involved as well as through participation and discussions at the two workshops mentioned under point 1) a workshop on NGOs and research by Medicus Mundi Switzerland in June 2012 in Basel, Switzerland; and 2) a workshop of the working group of Medicus Mundi International Network on research in October 2012, in Amsterdam, The Netherlands (see Annex 6).

4. Results

4.1. Literature Review

The literature review is divided into three parts and provides a summary of findings on:

1) Integration of research into NGO programming;
2) Translation of research into practice and policy; and
3) NGO–Research Institute collaborations.

4.1.1. Integration of research into NGO programming

Most of the literature on the integration of operational research into NGO health programming is based on the experience of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF). MSF began the integration of operational research into their programming more than a decade ago (Zachariah /Draquez 2012: 31). Main reasons for MSF to incorporate operational research into their strategy and programming: 1) to improve the quality of their programmes by assessing the effectiveness of their interventions; 2) to assess the feasibility of new models of interventions; and 3) to have a strong evidence-base for advocacy on health policy change (Harries et al. 2011: 147). The motivation for other NGOs to develop their research capacity and to start integrating research into their programming is similar. Their goal is to “inform policy, build up, evaluate and sustain programmes” (Kwon et al. 2012: 47), and contribute to “building a global evidence-base [...] and advocating for change” (Drake et al. 2010: 2123).

4.1.1.1. Barriers for NGOs to integrate research

There are several barriers that hinder NGOs to take up organisational research and to integrate it into their programming: 1) the lack of awareness by senior management on the relevance of operational research; 2) the perception that research might become an academically-driven, top-down exercise with little or no relevance to field work and communities; and 3) the lack of expertise and capacities especially in regards to designing and implementing research at the field level (Zachariah et al. 2010: 6).

Other studies support these findings and highlight not only the missing culture for research within the organisation and the lack of expertise, but the lack of funding and dedicated staff time for research as well (Bissell et al. 2012: 95; Kwon et al. 2012: 47; Cooke et al. 2008: 545; Delisle et al. 2005: 15; Porter et al. 2004: 85). There is also the concern that too much research may disturb the core day-to-day activities and divert resources from the organisation's primary work (Porter et al. 2004: 84; Zachariah et al. 2010: 6). Last but not least, sustaining research by building capacity and collaborative partnerships is further hampered by a high staff turnover within NGOs (Zachariah et al. 2010: 6).

4.1.1.2. Enablers for NGOs to integrate research

In order to introduce and institutionalize operational research within an NGO, it is important to develop a research policy, to build a separate operational research support unit, and to include research studies into the annual programme planning process (Zachariah et al. 2010: 2).

Further enabling factors in order to begin research include having protected time to do so, in addition to acquiring access to experts for technical advice, mentoring, training and capacity building (Cooke et al: 2008: 546). Harries et al. (2011: 150) confirm that research can be done if time and capacity are made available within NGO programming.

To secure the buy-in of organisational leadership, Kwon et al. (2012: 49) also identify the need of the executive leadership of organisations to participate in trainings. Delisle et al. (2005: 16) promote a peer-learning model of capacity building in research, whereby NGOs can benefit from the experiences of research-based NGOs.

To bring different stakeholders together and to promote partnerships, Delisle et al. (2005: 16) encourage NGOs to organise scientific seminars and workshops on global health research topics.

Capacity building is seen as an important enabler for integrating and conducting research (Cooke et al. 2008; Zachariah et al. 2012b: 1409; Bissell et al. 2012: 92; The SEA-ORCHID Study Group 2011: 1). Findings of a survey conducted by Kwon et al. (2012: 50) with Community Based Organisation leaders show a request to include the

following topics in a training curriculum: identification of funding opportunities, grant writing, and usage of data to inform programmes and policies.

Besides confirming the special necessity to invest in the capacity building of writing skills of NGO staff for publications, Harries et al. (2011:151) underline that both the content as well as the type of training are important thereby advocating for in-house solutions; i.e., in-house training, strong mentorship and training of national staff.

Zachariah et al. (2012b: 1410) add certain preconditions for successful training programmes: 1) strict selection criteria for participants, and 2) practical training; i.e., while learning the principles of operational research, the participants are conducting a study running through all stages of a research cycle ("output based approach")[7].

In 2009, a joint training course designed by The Union[8] and MSF took a new approach to teaching operational research and included the points highlighted by Zachariah et al. (2012b) (see also Annex 1: NGO Toolbox – Integration Step 2). The success and failure of the course is measured by the number of research projects undertaken by the participants, the number of submitted papers to international journals and publications, and the long-term outcomes such as the involvement of the participants in research after the completion of the course, including their influence on policy and practice (Bissell et al. 2012: 92).

First results of the completed courses are promising and confirm the effectiveness of the teaching approach (e.g. a total of 93 participants and 92 documented scientific papers, of which 54 are already published in peer reviewed journals) (cf. The Union Press Release 20-February-2013; Bissell et al. 2012; Harries 2012).

[7] Such as generating a research question, designing the study, collecting the data, analyzing the data, writing a paper, publishing in a peer-reviewed journal and advocating for policy and practice change. For an outline of different modules of such a course see Bissell et al. (2012: 93).

[8] The Union (International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease) is a non-profit Institute with 300 experts in TB, HIV, tobacco control and other issues working out of 14 offices worldwide and a federation of 3,000 organizations and individuals who are committed to the same goals. The goal of "The Union" is to bring innovation, expertise, solutions and support to address health challenges in low- and middle-income populations. (www.theunion.org)

Table 1: Summary barriers and enablers: integration of research

Barriers and Enablers to integrate research	Literature
Leadership and culture of NGO e.g. (lack of) institutional buy-in; (lack of) research policy.	Cooke et al. (2008: 544)
Finance / Funding e.g. (lack of) funding for research; research is (not) included in the annual budget.	Chirewa (2012: 232)
Time e.g. (shortage of) staff; work pressure; competing priorities.	Chirewa (2012:232); Cooke et al. (2008: 545)
Capacity e.g. (lack of) research capacity of staff (at the field, HQ as well as leadership); (lack of) awareness on the relevance of research; staff retention (difficulty in building and sustaining capacity due to high staff turnover)	Zachariah et al. (2010: 6); Royston (2011)

4.1.1.3. Tools: integration of research

Tools that support the integration of research into NGO programming can be divided into different steps required to do research within an NGO (detailed list of tools in Annex 1):

1. **Setting up operational research** within the NGO:
   - Checklist of required elements for building operational research in an NGO (e.g. competent staff such as research officer(s) and field staff; research included in the annual planning exercise and budget, etc.)
   - NGO research policy (such as definition of operational research, the purpose and procedures)
   - Examples of setups of operational support units
   - Capacity building
2. **Conducting research**: Guidelines and formats supporting the research implementation:
   - Research Protocol: format and required elements
   - Ethical Guidelines

- Guidelines for implementing different research methodologies (e.g. qualitative and quantitative research)

3. **Dissemination of research findings:** see below under 4.1.2.3. (Tools for translating research into policy and practice)

4.1.2. Translation of research into practice and policy

"Research helps us to identify what works, and what does not work and how to understand the local context when introducing new ways of working. There is no point doing research if the findings do not get into policy and practice."

(Whitty / Kinn 2011)

There are many reasons why NGOs play a crucial role in supporting the process of getting evidence into practice as well as why NGOs should be interested in getting evidence into practice:

1) NGOs can be implementers of research findings. Due to their geographic reach with projects and field offices in a number of settings and countries, they can support the translation of evidence from local to global levels (Drake et al. 2010: 2120).
2) NGOs can advocate for policy change using the research findings as evidence. NGOs are working with different stakeholders, they can disseminate research findings broadly and quickly, and they can put pressure on policy-makers to act on the evidence (Zachariah et al. 2012a: 418/419; Drake et al. 2010: 2120/2123).

However, the process of translating evidence into practice and policy is not an easy one, as the vast amount of literature on the topic shows. The following review gives an overview on getting research findings into NGO practice and policy; i.e., using research to change NGO programming and using research findings for advocacy.

4.1.2.1. Barriers for NGOs to translate research findings into practice

Some of the barriers NGOs face to translate research findings into practice are similar to the barriers to integrate and conduct research such as lack of time due to a

heavy workload and competing priorities. For example, NGO staff lack time to search for the latest evidence and to read different research papers (Nutley et al. 2007: 79). Time pressure makes it difficult for staff to draw lessons from evidence and they tend to rely on their own experiences (Jones 2012: 2).

Competing priorities (such as the focus on spending money while fulfilling diverse donor and other bureaucratic guidelines, etc.), make it difficult to make evidence-based learning a priority (ibid).

Other barriers include poor dissemination between and also within organisations, and restricted general access to research findings (Nutley et al. 2007: 73). Restricted access includes the costs of accessing academic peer-reviewed journal publications[9], limited exposure, as well as knowledge of some practitioners on how to find relevant evidence. If access is ensured, the translation may be hampered due to difficulties in understanding the research findings; i.e., to interpret the technical language and to apply it to the day-to-day work of personnel (Nutley et al. 2007: 72; Zachariah et al. 2012a: 418).

Another reason that research findings may not be translated into policy or practice by NGOs is that the research topic may not reflect the needs of NGOs that, for instance, manage specific health programs or advocate for certain health topics. As a consequence, there is no demand or use for the information. For that reason there is, according to WHO (2012: 18), “a need to conduct timely policy-relevant research, with input from research users (programme managers, implementers, civil society etc.) throughout the entire process”. But even if the research was embedded into NGO programming and the topic was in line with the needs of the NGO, the use of the findings may still be low as many NGOs have no systems in place to store knowledge and lessons learned. Additionally, the turnover of NGO staff in most organisations is high. Therefore, the knowledge will remain with a particular individual, and the one who

[9] There is an ongoing debate around intellectual property rights of research and the argument that public funded research should be accessible free of charge to academic institutions and the general public (Patterson 2012).

planned the programme may no longer be present when the final findings of the programme are available (cf. Jones 2012[10]: 1).

Lastly, the attitude of an individual person toward using research evidence to change practice may also be a key barrier, as some may be unwilling to do so. They might even see research as a threat to their way of working and the knowledge and skills they have already acquired (Nutley et al. 2007: 73).

4.1.2.2. Enablers for NGOs to translate research findings into practice

To address the barriers highlighted above, several enabling factors are identified in the literature. Especially, Nutley et al. (2007) have worked on the topic of how the use of research for public services, including the health sector, can be encouraged and improved.

The research findings have to be made available and they have to be understandable, such as through short summaries of findings explaining the content in a "user-friendly" way that is easy and quick to grasp for both medical and non-medical persons (Zachariah et al. 2012a: 418, Nutley et al. 2007: 83, Vogel et al. 2013: 8). One of the strategies promoted by Nutley et al. (2007: 146) is to use incentives or other kinds of reinforcements to ensure better use of research; e.g. incentives for researchers to communicate and disseminate their research findings to practitioners[11]. However, the process of communicating research findings in simple messages tends to worry some researchers (Makri 2013).

Access to literature databases and journal articles as well as participation in workshops is another way to access and get exposure to evidence (Cooke et al. 2008: 546).

The involvement of NGO staff in the research cycle as well as the collaboration between researchers and potential research users will also support the access to

[10] Jones (2012) lists in a background note of the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) the inherent system challenges to promote evidence-based decision making in development agencies. Although the focus of Jones is on development agencies, the challenges are transferrable to NGOs settings.

[11] The Swiss National Research Council has a programme where 10% of the funds are set aside for disseminating the findings outside the academic community (Nutley et al. 2007: 147). Also DFID outlines in their "How to note: Capacity Building in Research" (2010: 38), the need to allocate a minimum of 10% of program funding of research projects for communication.

findings and the use of research (Nutley et al. 2007: 80, 137). Organisations shall encourage their staff to question current practices and develop evidence-based changes, for this research has to be part of the organisational culture and therefore part of the job (ibid: 80). It is supportive to have staff that have moved between the two worlds of NGO and academia, and as a result are familiar with both sides (ibid: 66).

Creating links between the different stakeholders such as NGOs, RIs, research networks, government ministries and universities also during the research process will encourage the use of research (COHRED 2012: 35; Nutley et al. 2007: 88/89). Personal contacts and interactions between experts and peers, formal as well as informal, virtual as well as face-to-face (e.g. e-mails, telephone exchanges, meetings and shared workshops) are also enablers (Nutley et al. 2007: 65, 74).

There is also the possibility to cooperate with so-called “knowledge brokers” that bridge the gap between those who produce the research and those who will potentially use the knowledge, by raising awareness of decision-makers and bringing relevant stakeholders together such as NGOs, Ministry of Health etc. (Nutley et al. 2007: 74; Zachariah et al. 2012a: 418).

Practical training and professional development to find, understand and use research is also seen as an enabler (Nutley et al. 2007: 64). Jones (2012: 3) underlines that the capacities for those who should use evidence for programme and policy development are crucial, and proposes, for example, to link sector programming staff to an in-house advisor. The Research Uptake Guidance of DFID (2013a: 6) recommends starting with an internal (i.e., within one’s team) and external (i.e., within stakeholders who could use the research) capacity assessment as a basis for the design and implementation of a capacity building strategy. Key internal capacity areas to consider are:

- Information literacy (i.e., skills in finding and assessing academic literature)
- Knowledge of research methodologies
- Internal communication
- Internal knowledge management
- Academic writing and summarising skills
- Skills in communicating with non-specialists

Key areas to consider when assessing the capacities of key external stakeholders are:

- Understanding of research and skills in finding and appraising evidence
- Thematic topic knowledge
- Incentives (or disincentives) to consider evidence

Nutley et al. (2007: 152) summarize findings and evidence of research uptake in their book and conclude that the use of research is complex and context-dependent. The introduction of one of the enablers will not be sufficient to change practice (ibid: 133). A "range of strategies, drawing on multiple mechanisms" will be required to improve the translation of research findings into practice (ibid: 152).

Table 2: Summary barriers and enablers: translation of research

Enablers (barriers) to translate research	Literature
Organisational culture (Lack of) time to read research, (lack of) autonomy to implement research findings, (lack of) support (finance, admin, personnel), culture (resistance) to do research, (no) continuous support of leadership / (no) champions	Nutley et al. (2007: 82/93); Peirson et al. (2012:6)
NGOs influence on research agenda (assess the practical use of research) "Problem-oriented research agenda, defined by research users"; makes research output more useful and useable	McLaren (2013: 2); WHO (2012: 18)
Access to "user friendly" research findings (No) dissemination of findings (externally and internally); (poor) communication of research findings (discourages the usage); summaries of research findings, including information on the quality of evidence, in a clear and simple language; (process of) simplification of messaging (tends to worry some scientists)	Zachariah et al. (2012a: 418); Nutley et al. (2007: 83); McLaren (2013: 2); Cooke et al. (2008: 544-546); Vogel et al. (2013: 8); Makri (2013); Peirson et al. (2012: 8)
Interaction (No) development of linkages, (no) interpersonal interactions with experts and peers	Nutley et al. (2007:65)
Facilitation /Mediation (No) champions / influential people / or professional knowledge brokers supporting the process e.g. timely sharing of information, using the right words, addressing the right people	Nutley et al. (2007:143ff); Romo (2013)

Enablers (barriers) to translate research	Literature
Incentives and “reinforcers” (No) incentive not only to “do the science” but to also make sure it gets used; not to link academic career advancement to number of peer-reviewed publications only	Nutley et al. (2007:146); McLaren (2013: 2)
Capacity Building (Not) to understand technical language of evidence; (not) to understand the importance of evidence and how to find, assess and adapt it; knowledge on how to communicate to non-specialists	Nutley et al. (2007: 64); McLaren (2013 : 3); Jones (2012: 3); DFID (2013a: 6-8); Zachariah et al. (2012a:416-417) Peirson et al. (2012: 10); Romo (2013)
Knowledge Management (No) easily accessible, user-friendly, up-to-date, electronic and searchable system including tools, templates and manuals; disseminating the information via different channels depending on audience	Peirson et al. (2012: 8); Romo (2013)

4.1.2.3. Tools: translation of research findings

Tools that facilitate the translation of research findings into policy and practice focus on (detailed list of tools see Annex 1):

1. **Dissemination of research findings** so that they can have an impact on policy and practice. Examples are to write a scientific paper and to submit it for publication at a peer-reviewed journal, to attend relevant conferences and submit abstracts of study findings as well as to write concise and “user friendly” briefs on the evidence gathered. Tools include:
   - Guidelines on how to write a scientific paper
   - Tips on how to submit a paper to a scientific journal
   - Tips for abstract writing for submission at national and international conferences
   - Tips for writing effective briefs on research outcomes
   - Tips on how to effectively communicate research findings

2. **Access to existing research findings** through several initiatives which gather and summarize existing evidence collected in the area of health (see links to the relevant websites under Annex 1).

3. **Guidelines and checklists for research uptake** including knowledge management, building of networks, linkages and communities of practice, working with knowledge brokers, and monitoring and evaluating the impact of research.

4.1.3. NGO–Research Institute collaborations

"…partnerships need nurturing: they require trust, mutual goals, close relationships, and equitable investments and rewards." (COHRED 2012: 32)

Recent projects have explored partnerships between NGOs (practitioners) and Research Institutions (academics). A research project funded by the Development Studies Association New Ideas Initiative and implemented by the International NGO Training and Research Centre (INTRAC), World Vision UK, and the University Bradford looked at research collaborations between academics and practitioners in international development (March-June 2012)[12]. They specifically explored how partnerships are negotiated and navigated, the impetus behind partnerships, how collaboration affects research results, and the highs and lows of collaboration.

The findings show a complex picture of academic–practitioner partnerships. The divide between researchers and NGOs is not as strong as expected. There is a "movement between these 'worlds'," with a great many researchers having experience on both sides (INTRAC et al. 2012 b: 1).

Another project was established by ELRHA (Enhancing Learning & Research for Humanitarian Assistance) in 2009 with the aim to link the research community with the international humanitarian community. The goal was to conduct research in partnership for reaching a measurable impact in the humanitarian field, as well as to increase the professionalism of humanitarian work. As a result of this initiative, a practical guide was developed to support collaboration. The guide highlights the opportunities and challenges that are eminent to such collaborations and provides ideas how to overcome the challenges[13].

[12] See: http://www.intrac.org/pages/en/cracking-collaboration-a-new-look-at-partnerships-in-international-development-research.html
[13] See: http://www.elrha.org

4.1.3.1. Reasons for collaboration

According to Delisle et al. (2005: 17), partnerships between NGOs and RIs are one means of increasing the research capacity of NGOs as well as that of academia – each side having a "value-added contribution to make to global health research" (ibid) and each side complementing the other.

<u>Comparative advantage of RIs and benefit for NGOs:</u>

- Expertise in "translating a problem into a researchable problem" (WHO/GFATM 2008: 3).
- Expertise and knowledge in rigorous research methods and general research skills (INTRAC et al. 2012a: 6; ELRHA 2012: 15) thereby ensuring the quality of the research (WHO/ GFATM 2008: 3).
- Expertise in writing scientific papers (Porter et al. 2004: 81).
- Getting issues on the research agenda or communicating their ideas (ibid).

<u>Comparative advantage of NGOs and benefit for RIs:</u>

- Promotion and advocacy for relevant health research: practitioners are close to healthcare needs and are able to identify relevant research questions and stimulate demand for those (Hayman 2012b: 2; Delisle 2005: 5-7).
- Access to the field, to communities, and to data for research (ELRHA 2012: 15; INTRAC 2012a: 5).
- NGOs can support the development of local expertise in health research (Delisle 2005: 7).
- Knowledge translators: *"NGOs interpret the knowledge generated by research to their constituents"* (Delisle 2005: 8).
- NGOs advocacy supports the dissemination of research as well as the uptake of research (Zachariah et al. 2012a:419).

Besides mutual reinforcing reasons and motivations to collaborate, each side also has additional reasons why they are aiming for collaboration. For example, for RIs the collaboration may be a source of income. It may also serve their aim of

strengthening their corporate social responsibility and a collaboration could have a positive impact on their reputation – being viewed as "a centre of excellence that links research and teaching" (ELRHA 2012: 15). For NGOs, collaboration could, for example, provide access to an academic network as well as to new funding sources; collaboration could provide "weight and respect" that will strengthen their research, policy work and advocacy; collaboration could also support the development of innovations and allow the analysis of complex issues that are relevant for the NGO but also for the specific sector (ibid). Last but not least, the NGOs receive the knowledge of experts to resolve a problem, and the effectiveness of NGO programmes is externally and impartially reviewed. The CBOs surveyed by Kwon et al. (2012: 47) also highlight that collaboration helped them to build organisational capacity.

4.1.3.2. Types of collaboration

Different types of research partnerships exist, driven by "multiple, often overlapping rationales: opportunism, ideals, fashion, curiosity, needs and credibility" (INTRAC et al. 2012b: 1). Roper (2002: 341) identified five different types of collaborations:

1) Expert-Consultant model and 2) Expert-Trainer Model:

In both trainer and consultant model, the NGO contracts the research partner to support the research process with expertise according to specific terms of references.

3) Joint-Learning Model: This is more a partnership based approach. Both parties work jointly on a topic (e.g. joint seminars, staff exchanges, collaborative research).

4) Best Practice Model: Academics conduct research to support the establishment of good practice approaches and guidelines.

5) Theory Development Model: RI collaborates with NGO to develop new theories and frameworks and to test them in the field.

Recent discussions are around the trend of co-producing research (Hayman 2012a/b; Jung et al. 2012), similar to Roper's "joint-learning model." Co-producing means that both parties, NGOs and researchers, are involved jointly in all stages of the research process. Research is seen as a collective rather than a solitary exercise (Jung

et al. 2012: 3). Camburn (2011: 30) highlights that co-production models, where both NGOs and researchers are actively engaged, tend to be more effective in terms of changing practice and generating and testing new theories. The research and its outcome are for both sides relevant and important: NGOs can demonstrate results and impact, and researchers can verify relevance and value of their work. Such an approach of co-producing also facilitates further access to funding for both sides (Hayman 2012b).

Another form of collaboration that is growing is between NGOs and universities and their students who have to do research for their thesis or dissertation (INTRAC et al. 2012b: 1; ELRHA 2012: 73). However, it is argued that there is still a need to explore better ways in generating student involvement (Green 2013). For more information on the challenges and recommended approaches for collaborations between NGOs and students, please refer to ELRHA (2012: 72-74).

4.1.3.3. Challenges of NGO-Research Institute collaborations

Different challenges of collaboration have been identified by the INTRAC research project (INTRAC et al. 2012b: 2-3) such as:

- **Research orthodoxy** e.g. pressure for academics to publish in top peer-reviewed journals versus need of NGO partners for user-friendly and accessible publications;
- **Access to data and research** e.g. most NGOs have no access to data (e.g. peer-reviewed journals, data sets); data is often not according to the need of NGOs, at the same time not much data of NGO programming is in the public domain; and
- **Institutional challenges** e.g. divergent time frames, different management systems, open research versus NGO sensitivity to negative results, need of buy-in at the senior level on both sides.

The findings of the INTRAC research project confirm other findings from different authors as summarized in the table below.

Table 3: Challenges of NGO-Research Institute Collaboration

Challenges of collaborations	Literature
Balance between interest of NGOs and RI Different expectations on outcome and requirements; different incentive structures; pressure to publish in academic journals versus user-friendly results and pragmatic knowledge; priority of "excellence" (RI) versus "relevance" (NGO).	Chirewa (2012: 232); Camburn (2012); Macduff (2000: 56); Aniekwe et al. (2012: 15); Porter et al. (2004: 81); McLaren (2013: 2); Ferguson (2005 : 47-50); Tol (2012: 32)
Time Different time frames, different rhythm / pace, partnership took more staff time than it was worth / planned; lack of available time to work on the collaboration; time pressure to implement programmes versus time needed to consider all aspects of the topic.	Chirewa (2012: 232); Kwon et al. (2012: 47); Porter et al. (2004: 84); INTRAC (2012a: 2); Aniekwe et al. (2012: 15); ELRHA (2012: 55, 60); Ferguson (2005: 47); Tol et al. (2012: 32)
Readiness for collaboration / research Readiness of NGO to do research versus readiness of RIs to work with NGOs.	Chirewa (2012: 232); Jung (2012: 4); Zachariah et al. (2012a: 416)
Communication Different perspectives, different approaches, lack of clarity, lack of understanding, different institutional cultures.	Kwon et al. (2012: 47); Porter et al. (2004: 81, 84-85); Roper (2002: 339-340); Masseli et al. (2006: 27); Macduff/Netting (2000: 50); Aniekwe et al. (2012: 15)

4.1.3.4. Success factors for collaborations

The development of trust between the two partners, the NGO and the RI, is according to the literature, one of the most important ingredients for a successful collaboration (Chiwara 2012: 232; Kwon et al. 2012: 47; Porter et al. 2004: 84/85; Masseli et al. 2006: 23; Macduff/Netting 2000: 49; Hill /INTRAC NGO Research Forum 2012: 3; Lys et al. 2012: 1; Jung et al. 2012: 10). In order to build trust, it is important to have sufficient time to develop the partnership, to clarify expectations, roles and responsibilities, and to set goals (Roper 2002: 340-341; Masseli 2006: 23; Camburn 2011: 31). Face-to-face meetings are supportive especially at the beginning of a collaboration in the "incubation period" (Masseli et al. 2006: 23; Jung et al. 2012: 10). The need for creating opportunities for interaction and engagement (including informal ones to build relationships) is also one of the findings from the ELRHA project (2012: 54).

Although the Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries is promoting academic research partnerships with developing and transition countries, the eleven principles of research partnerships identified by them are also applicable for partnerships between NGOs and RIs. The principles include 1) set the agenda together; 2) interact with stakeholders; 3) clarify responsibilities; 4) account to beneficiaries; 5) promote mutual learning; 6) enhance capacities; 7) share data and networks; 8) disseminate the results; 9) pool profits and merits; 10) apply results; and 11) secure outcomes (Stöckli et al. 2012)[14]. For the Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries these "principles are a fundamental prerequisite, not only to allow for mutually beneficial research partnerships, but also to generate desired impact" (Masseli et al. 2006: 23).

The findings of ELRHA also confirm the need for a dialogue between the partners to identify each partner's expectations. Further transparency, flexibility and a commitment to improve the programming of NGOs (in the case of ELRAH – humanitarian operations) are identified as key success factors for collaborations between academics and practitioners. At the INTRAC NGO Research Forum in May 2012 (Executive Summary: page 3), Frances Hill from ELRHA also outlined the following core principles of a partnership:

- **Equity:** *"leads to respect to the added value each party brings"*;
- **Transparency:** *"leads to trust with partners more willing to innovate and take risks"*; and
- **Mutual Benefit:** *"leads to engagement and makes it more likely that the relationship will be sustained over time."*

For Hill (INTRAC NGO Research Forum 2012: 3), mutual benefit is the "principal driver of collaboration" and essential for a successful and sustainable collaboration. The institutional buy-in from both sides – NGO and RI leadership – is also seen as very important (INTRAC 2012a: 2). However, Macduff/Netting (2000: 50) state that the

[14] The principles were first developed by the Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries in 1998 (KFPE 1998), and updated in 2012 to reflect current trends and experiences (Stöckli et al. 2012).

“higher the status of the practitioner and researcher,” the easier it is to engage in collaborations even if the institutional support and acknowledgement is low.

In general, the partnership will depend strongly on the persons who are involved and the personal understanding and “chemistry” between them (INTRAC 2012a: 2). To build a strong collaboration, it is seen as supportive if the individuals have experience in the academia as well as in the field – the so-called “Pr-academics” and “Ac-tioners” (INTRAC 2012a: 2; Macduff/Netting 2000: 58/59; ELRHA 2012: 57).

Porter et al. (2004: 8) highlight that partnerships develop over time and long-standing collaborations are enabling factors for success. However, frequent staff turnover within NGOs can have a negative impact on sustaining collaboration (Zachariah et al. 2010: 6).

Table 4: Summary of enablers for NGO-Research Institute collaborations

Enabling Factors for a successful collaboration	**Literature**
Key ingredients	
Trust	Kwon et al. (2012: 47); Macduff / Netting (2000: 49); INTRAC (2012a: 2)
Equity	INTRAC NGO Research Forum (2012: 3)
Transparency	INTRAC NGO Research Forum (2012: 3)
Respect	Chiwara (2012: 233); Masseli et al. (2006: 23); ELRHA (2012: 30) ; Ferguson (2005 : 52)
Enablers to develop the key ingredients	
Ongoing dialogue To have regular meetings and exchanges; to clarify purpose and expectations; to reflect and learn.	Chiwara (2012: 232); Lys et al. (2012: 2); Masseli et al. (2006: 23); ELRHA (2012: 23); Camburn (2011: 31)
Invest time To build the relationship for meaningful and active participation; to get to know each other; to understand each other’s interests, differences, and priorities.	Chiwara (2012: 233); Porter et al. (2004: 83); Masseli et al. (2006: 23); Ferguson (2005: 51)
Institutional buy-in To come from both sides; necessary to ensure that priority is given to the project and that necessary time and resources are invested.	INTRAC (2012a: 2/ 2012b: 3); Ferguson (2005: 52)

Enabling Factors for a successful collaboration	Literature
Mutual benefit To provide added value for both sides.	Lys et al. (2012: 1); Delisle et al. (2005: 17); Camburn (2011:31)

4.1.3.5. Tools: collaborations between NGOs and Research Institutes

There are several tools available that facilitate the development and formalisation of collaborations between NGOs and RIs. The tools are introduced below according to the stage of the collaboration (detailed information see Annex 1):

1. Linking NGOs and Research Institutes

- Platforms for NGOs and RIs to meet, outline their needs and start discussing a possible collaboration:
  E.g. Research Matching Facility developed by ELRHA (2012 - focus on the humanitarian sector); Medicus Mundi Marketplace for NGOs “in search of research” and young researchers (2012 - focus on the health sector).

2. Starting a collaboration

- Guidelines supporting the development of a collaboration:
  E.g. Checklists for discussing the aim of collaborating: primary objective, expected output, process, participants, etc.; tips on ensuring a successful scoping process; partner assessment form and toolkit to determine the readiness of the partners.

3. Formalising a NGO–Research Institute Collaboration

- Examples of formalizing collaborations
- Checklist highlighting the points to be included in an agreement
- Tools to develop a partnership agreement

4. Implementing a NGO–Research Institute Collaboration

- Tools facilitating the implementation of collaboration e.g. Partnership Baseline Matrix, Partnership Monitoring Tool.

4.2. Results from the Questionnaire

4.2.1. Response rate and characteristics of responding organisations

A total of 23 organisations responded to the questionnaire that was sent out to 30 MMI Network Members; i.e., a response rate of 76 percent.

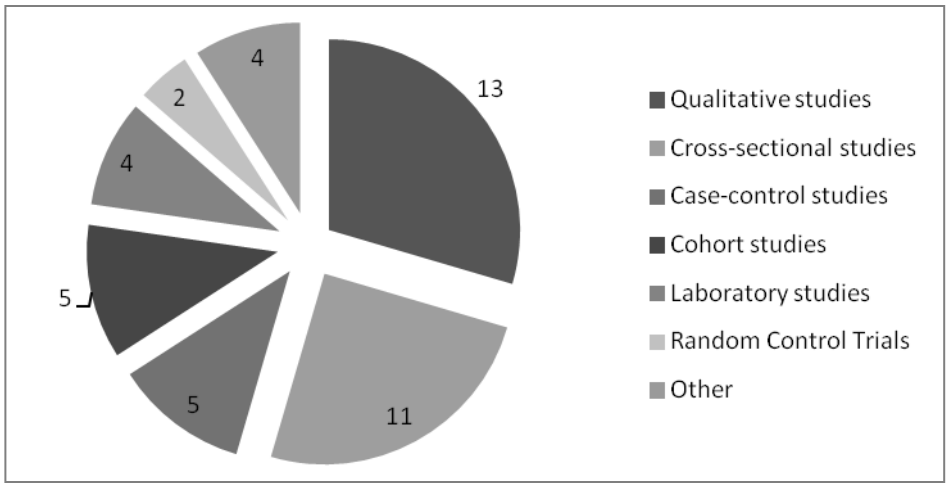
Table 5: Characteristics of responding organisations

Characteristic		Freq.	%
Type of Organisation	International NGO	12	52%
	National NGO	8	35%
	Other (Network, Foundation International Religious Order)	3	13%
Core Work	Project implementation through partners	14	61%
	Direct project implementation	13	57%
	Advocacy	8	35%
	Other	4	22%
Budget (EUR)	< 500,000	5	22%
	500,000 - 1 M	3	13%
	> 1 – 5 M	3	13%
	> 5 - 10 M	4	17%
	> 10 - 25 M	2	9%
	> 25 - 50 M	2	9%
	> 50 - 100 M	1	4%
	> 100 M	3	13%

4.2.2. Experience of NGOs to integrate research

Among the responding organisations, 74% (17) have experience in integrating research into their work. Of those, the majority has experience with qualitative research (76% (13/17)) and cross-sectional studies (65% (11/17)). Some organisations also conduct case-control studies (29% (5/17)), cohort studies (29% (5/17)), laboratory studies (4/17), and randomised control trials (2/17).

Table 6: Type of research conducted

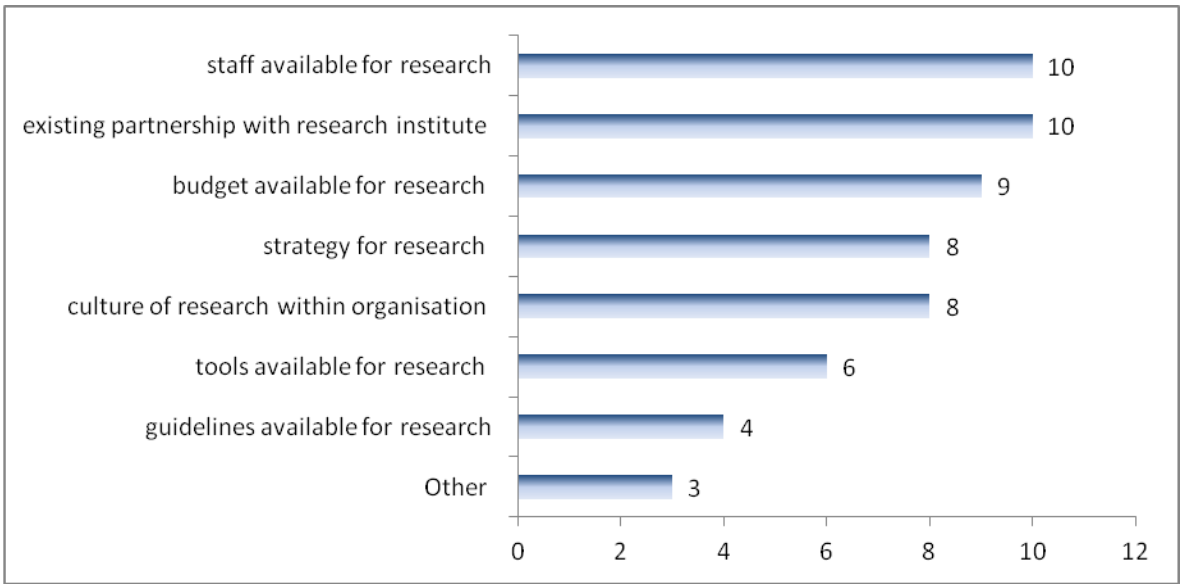


Note: Multiple answers possible

Enabling and hindering factors to conduct / integrate research

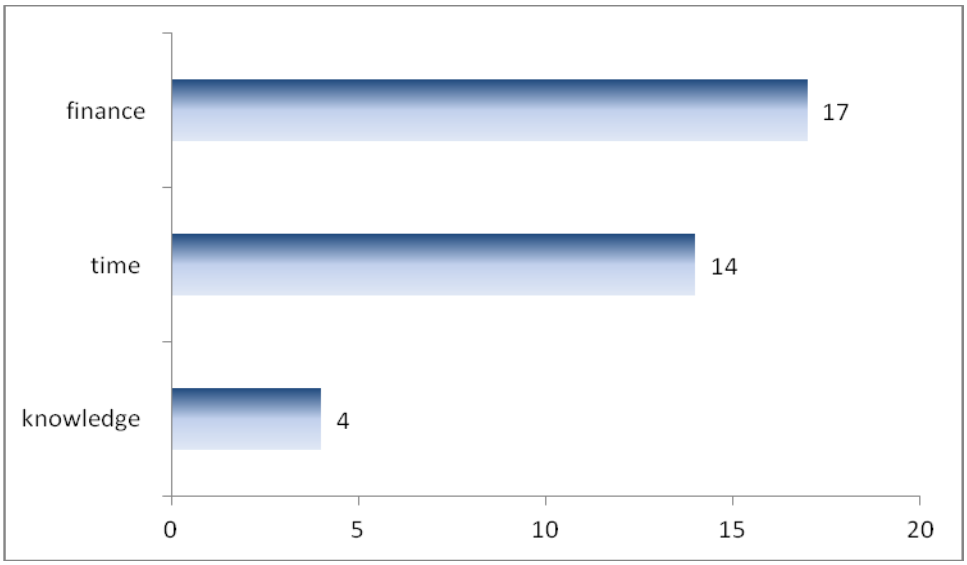
For those who already have experience in integrating research into their work, the main enabling factors for doing so are staff availability for research (10/17) and an existing partnership with an RI (10/17). 50% of the respondents state that a budget (9/17) for research as well as a strategy (8/17) and a culture (8/17) of research within the organisation are enablers. One-third of the organisations mention access to relevant tools as an enabling factor.

Table 7: Enabling factors to integrate research



Note: Multiple answers possible

Table 8: Hindering factors to integrate research



All respondents mentioned finance as a hindering factor to conduct more research, followed by time (14/17) and knowledge (4/17).

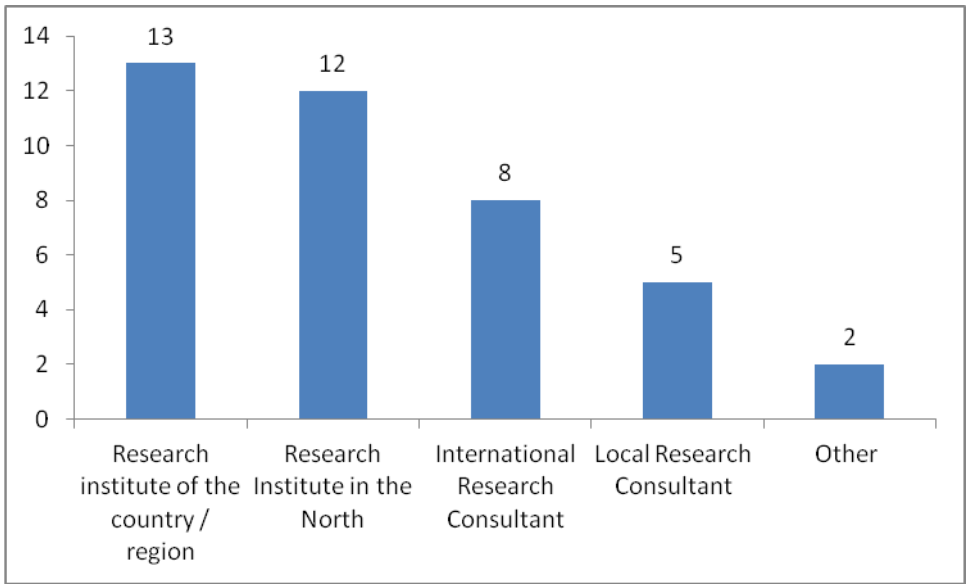
Note: Multiple answers possible

For those organisations with no experience yet in integrating research into their work (n= 6), the main hindering factors are the same as mentioned by the organisations who already conduct research: finance (5/6), time (4/6), and knowledge (3/6). Two respondents mentioned the additional factor of having no research partner.

4.2.3. Collaboration with research partner / institution

Of the 17 organisations that have integrated research into their work, 12 (71%) conduct research with an RI, 4 (24%) of the respondents sometimes conduct the research either with a partner or on their own, depending on the situation. Only one organisation has not yet collaborated with a research partner.

Table 9: Type of research partner



Note: Multiple answers possible

The majority of the organisations work with either an RI of the country /region where the research takes place or with one in the "North."

<u>Who approached whom?</u>

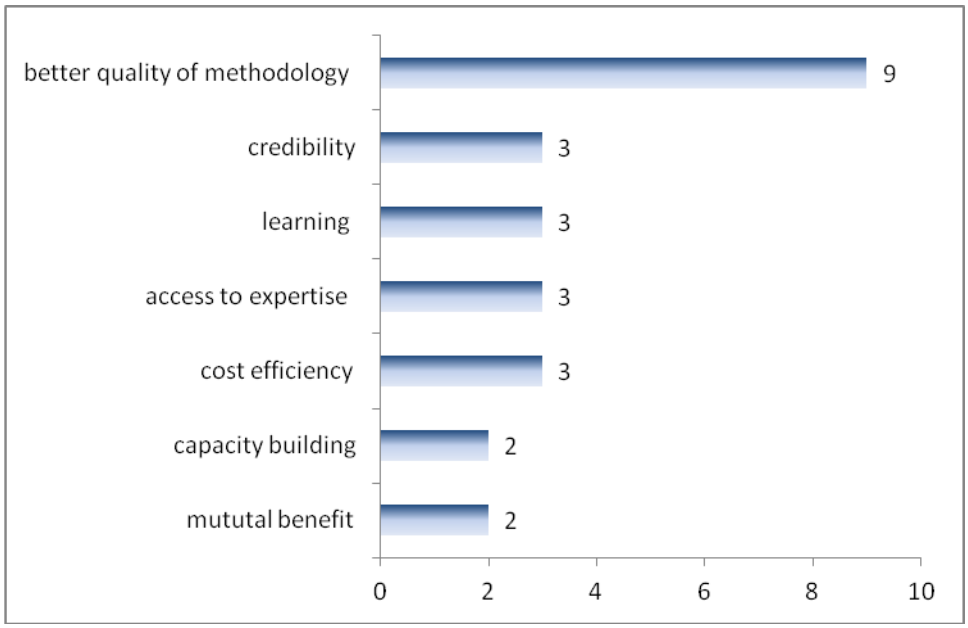
More than 60% (10/16) of the organisations approached their research partner requesting collaboration. In one case the research partner approached the NGO. The other respondents mentioned that it depends on the situation (3/16): sometimes they approach the research partner, and sometimes the research partner approaches them, or they did not know (2/16).

Formalization of research partnership

More than 60% (9/16) of the organisations formalized the relationship with the research partner. For 20% (3/16) it depends on the situation: sometimes the collaboration is formalized, sometimes not.

Main benefits of collaboration

Table 10: Benefits of collaboration with Research Institute



Note: Multiple answers possible

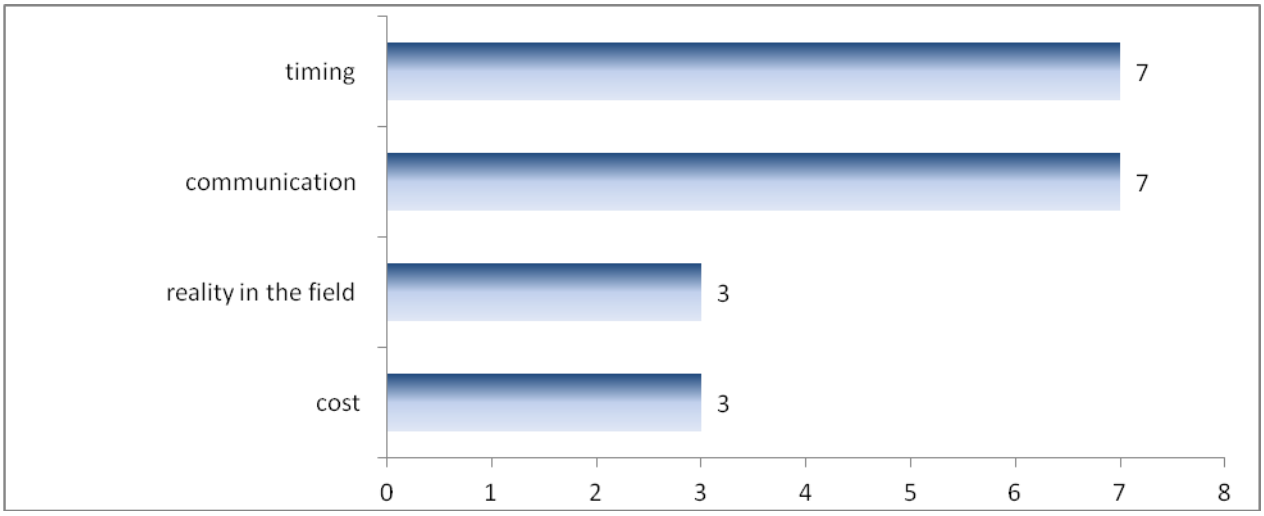
The main benefit of a collaboration highlighted by 56% (9/16) of the respondents is a better quality in the methodology, hence correct and better data and analysis are expected. Other benefits mentioned are an increase in credibility for the organisation and its work, the opportunity for learning and access to expertise. Three respondents stated a benefit of fewer costs and higher efficiency when collaborating. Also the point was mentioned that the collaboration is beneficial for both sides: a win-win situation where each side is doing what they are best qualified to do.

Key challenges of collaboration

Key challenges highlighted by the respondents are the different time perspectives of researchers and organisations, including the amount of time that has to be invested before starting a research and for data collection, as well as the challenge of a timely execution of the research ("field would like to get the results fast," "we have different time schedules"). Communication is additionally noted as a key challenge with the concern of not "speaking the same language." Also mentioned is the reality in the

field and proper adaptation to ensure that quality research is possible. Costs are also stated as a challenge, such as the concern that "costs for research are as high as the intervention costs."

Table 11: Challenges of collaboration with Research Institute



Note: Multiple answers possible

4.2.4. Experience of organisations to translate research findings into practice

Among the responding organisations, 74% (17/23) have experience translating research findings into practice. Of those, 65% (11/17) rely on either their own research findings or others'; 24% (4/17) rely on the research findings of others; 12% (2/17) use their own research findings.

Out of the organisations that have experience in translating research findings into practice, the findings were used to either change project activities (12/17), to design projects (12/17), for advocacy (12/17), or they resulted in a publication (11/17).

<u>Enabling and hindering factors to translate research findings into practice</u>

For those who have already experience in translating research findings into practice, the main enabling factors for doing so are participation in workshops and conferences (13/17) as well as an evidence-based approach within the culture of the organisation (12/17). Other points mentioned by more than 50% of the respondents are

availability of summaries of research findings, participation in trainings and availability of staff.

Table 12: Enabling factors to translate research findings into practice

Note: Multiple answers possible

As hindering factors for translating research findings into practice, nearly 50% mention that they have no time to search for research findings, followed by the point that the existing research is not relevant for their programmes (30%).

Table 13: Hindering factors to translate research findings into practice

Note: Multiple answers possible

For those who do not yet have experience in translating research findings into practice (n=6), the main hindering factors are as follows: research findings not

presented in an “understandable” way (3/6) and no knowledge of how to apply research findings (2/6), as well as lack of time (2/6).

4.2.5. Tools: supportive, available and required tools

Guidelines, manuals and training materials are considered by more than one-third of the respondents (8/23) as supportive tools for integrating research into their work or to translate existing research findings into practice. Guidelines, manuals and training materials are also available in around 40% (9/23) of the organisations. However, around 17% of the respondents (4/23) replied that such guidelines have yet to be made available in their organisation.

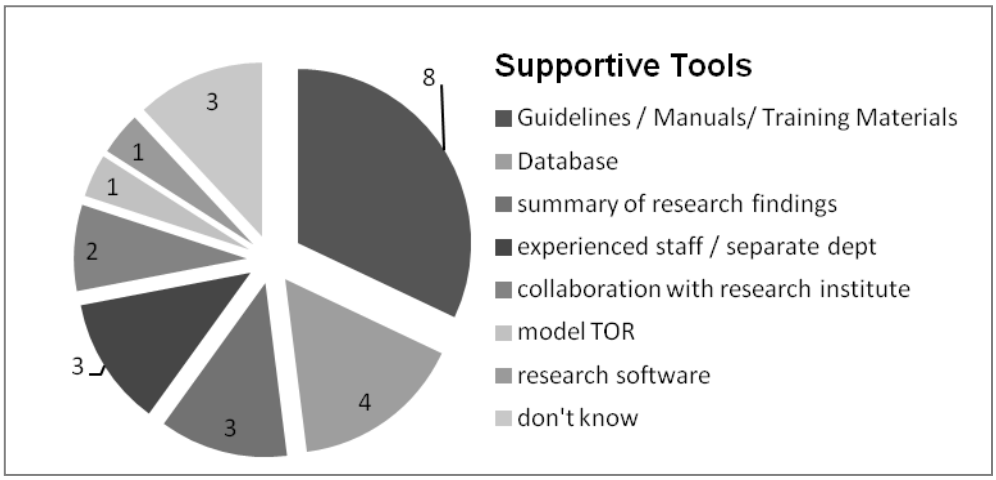
A **database** is also mentioned as a supportive (4/23) and available (3/23) tool. More than 20% (5/23) of the respondents mentioned that a database would be a tool that has yet to be developed to support their research process. In regards to the content of the database, one example cited was that it could include a directory for finding suitable research partners.

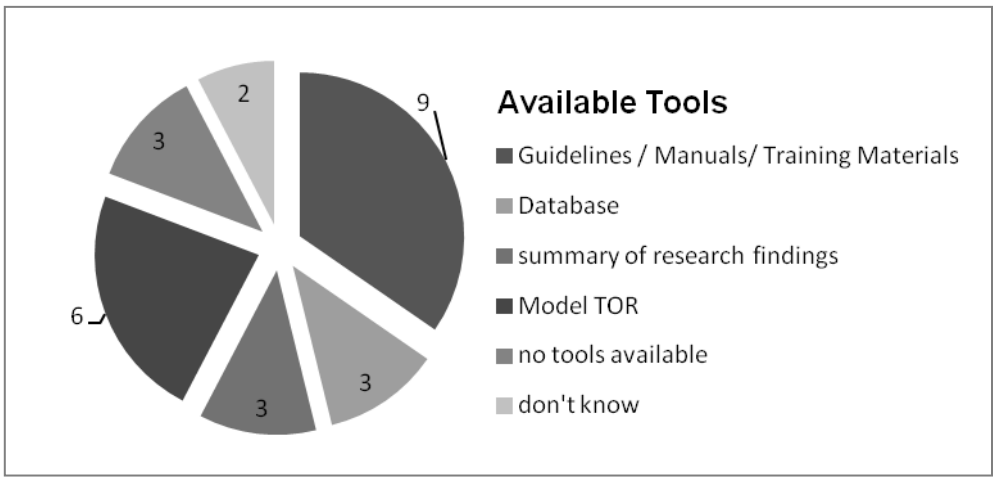
A **summary of research findings** is also a supportive and available tool indicated by three respondents. Such a summary could be integrated into a database, as one respondent indicated. From the available data, no conclusions can be drawn as to whether other respondents thought the same.

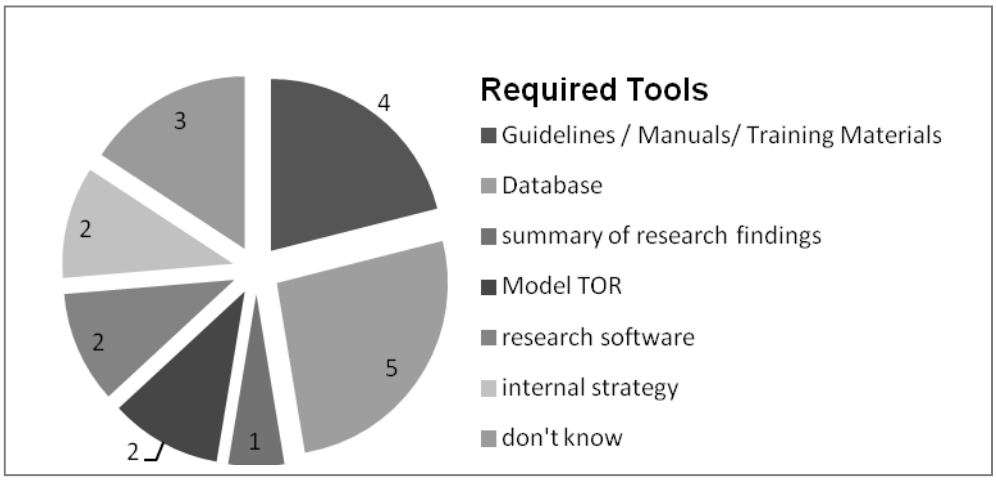
Some organisations have model TORs available in their organisation (6/23) and only 2 of 23 indicated that this supportive tool has yet to be developed.

Other answers included the development of research software (2/23; e.g. for data analysis, data presentation), the development of an internal strategy (2/23; e.g. to define clear roles and responsibilities within the organisation for research, to systematically cooperate with research partners); some respondents (3/23) were unable to indicate what supportive tools might be useful and worth developing.

Figure 3: Supportive, available and required tools







4.3. Results from the Case Studies

4.3.1. Integration of research into NGO

The following summary on how research is integrated into NGO practice and the preconditions, benefits and challenges, is based on interviews with 10 representatives of NGOs that have integrated research into their work, as well as on discussions with MMI Network members during two MMI workshops on the topic (see Annex 4-6).

4.3.1.1. How is research integrated into NGO practice?

All NGOs interviewed indicated two main points on how research is integrated into their organisation:

1) Research is part of their organisational strategy (for one organisation, research is a stated part of their mission), i.e. research is seen as part of their work as it is used to prepare, support, evaluate and improve programming in the field.
2) A separate department or team of experts within the NGO is responsible for conducting or facilitating research.

For these NGOs, the management and implementation of programs and research are closely linked. For HealthNet TPO this is the “cybernetic loop,” i.e. research outcomes are integrated as feedback into programmes. The staff in the field is also seen as an important stakeholder, as most of the research ideas are developed at the field and programming level.

4.3.1.2. Preconditions

The following preconditions for integrating research into NGO practice are highlighted:

<u>Investment of funds:</u>

- The necessity of investing funds to build research expertise within the organisation.
- The necessity of having funding to implement research.

<u>Capacity – technical expert team:</u>

- Team of experts at HQ and field level (technical experts (e.g. on specific health topics), but also knowledge in research methods and statistics).

- Staffs are “prac-ademics,” i.e. they have previously been involved in research (e.g. pursuing their PhD) or have worked at universities or RIs.
- Interest in knowledge management and learning as well as having a certain level of “curiosity.”

Buy-in of leadership:

- Leadership is supporting the research (“Organisation was initiated by a person with a research background”).
- Drive in the organisation to do research.

Partnerships and networks:

- Part of networks and existing links to universities and different RIs.

Good systems and structures in place:

- Good health information and surveillance system.
- Good M&E system and data management system.
- Good project structure.

4.3.1.3. Benefits and challenges of integrating research

The main benefit of integrating research into their work as perceived by the NGOs is the improvement of their programme design and implementation, and consequently their programme results and impact. Other benefits include the perception of the NGOs as having the technical expertise on a particular topic and being seen as an important stakeholder in that field. It also strengthens their reputation among various stakeholders such as government and donors. Research can open doors for NGOs: it enables them to actively participate and exchange knowledge in networks as well as at national and international conferences. They have access to the latest evidence and are able to contribute to a larger knowledge base. Moreover, research can open doors to new funding opportunities.

However, NGOs encounter different challenges in respect of integrating research into their work. Lack of funding and capacities are highlighted by all NGOs:

Funding:

- Research requires a certain infrastructure.
- Difficult to get research funding / competing with universities.
- Problem of using funds for research if there are funding gaps for the continuation of existing programs.

Capacities:

- Time constraints.
- Limited knowledge at HQ and field level: expertise required at HQ and field level, e.g. to develop protocols, good questionnaires, sampling, data collection and analysis.
- Research has to be carefully monitored.
- Interest in research within the organisations varies.

One NGO employee summarized the conflict between research and project implementation, “research takes away resources from programme implementation - time, effort, money.”

Table 14: Case Study: Benefits and Challenges in integrating research

	NGOs active in research
Benefits	• Knowledge building • Improved program design, implementation and impact • Opens doors to funding, networks, new partners • Perceived as technical experts • Positive impact on reputation
Challenges	• Funding • Capacities (time, knowledge)

4.3.1.4. Lessons learned from the Case Study

The main lessons that the NGOs learned in regard to the required setup and that need to be considered when engaging in collaborations are:

Setup for research within NGOs:

Funding:

- Adequate funding allows for the required setup for quality research and programming, including capacity building at all levels.

Capacities:

- Mix of knowledge important, and has to be brought together: knowledge for running the programmes in the field and for conducting rigorous research.
- Repurpose staff with an interest in research as staff with responsibility for the research components.
- Involving and empowering the field partners enables them to conduct research themselves.

Culture:

- Research is for most NGOs a recent and supplementary activity that has been developed only over recent years; consequently, some staff and even some NGO leaders have yet to fully appreciate its necessity.
- Operational research has to be inherent within the organisation and not the interest of certain individuals, in order to sustain it over time.

Priority setting and collaborations

- For some topics the evidence base is very clear, which creates a necessity to focus on where there is absence of evidence.
- Important to clearly define what is possible for an NGO to do themselves and when it is necessary to “buy-in” the necessary expertise – not possible for an NGO to have experience and expertise in everything.
- Collaborations with RIs are very useful and supportive for NGOs, to access additional expertise as well as funding opportunities.
- Comparative advantage for NGOs is that they incorporate “a thinker and a doer part” in research which is strengthening their positions in consortia and collaborations.
- Supportive for collaborations if NGOs have the full expertise on the topic so that they are able to define and negotiate their position as an equal part

Table 15: Responses from NGO representatives on integrating research (selection)

Integration of research into NGO practice
Allocation of financial resources:
"Research is taking funding away from NGO programs. When there is not enough funding coming in, research is the first thing to be cut."
"*Research takes away resources from program implementation - time, effort, money."*
"Dilemma of reducing activities in favour of doing research"
Financial Resources:
"Maintaining the infrastructure for research is cost-intensive"
"More funding allows the required setup for quality research and quality programming including the capacity building at all levels."
Organisational culture and setup:
"There has to be a drive in the organisation for research"
"Research has to be carefully monitored – capacity has to be there"
"Expertise to develop protocols, good questionnaires, sampling, etc. a must"
"Many people involved in public health, like medical doctors or those with a PhD, have been exposed to research."
"Knowledge held by individual people, not institutionalized"
"If necessary we will "buy in" the necessary expertise/competencies - not possible to have expertise on everything"
"Damaging for credibility if not well done"

4.3.2. Translation of research findings

The findings presented below on the barriers and enablers for NGOs in translating research findings into practice and policy are based on interviews with representatives of NGOs, as well as on discussions at different workshops[15] on the topic (see Annex 4-6).

[15] Mainly during the Thematic Workshop "Getting research and innovation into policy and practice" at the SDC Research Fair, as well as during a Webinar organised by INTRAC on "Gathering and Using Evidence: Assessing the needs of practitioners" (for details (e.g. guiding questions) see Annex 6).

4.3.2.1. Barriers

As highlighted by the NGO representatives, the core challenges are both accessing existing evidence and evaluating and using this evidence:

<u>Difficulty in accessing evidence:</u>

- To identify the evidence: how and where to find it?
- To identify what to use from a mass of data ("*how to deal with all the information*").
- To be confident in identifying existing evidence gaps.

<u>Difficulty in understanding and evaluating evidence – research literacy:</u>

- To understand the evidence found.
- To evaluate the quality of the existing evidence
  (Does the study use the appropriate research design to answer the question?; How strong is the internal and external validity of the study?; How precise are the findings?; How consistent are the findings in comparison to other studies?).

<u>Limited capacity and lack of resources:</u>

- Capacity and skills to gather and use evidence at different levels.
- Time, sufficient staff and funding required to doing so.
- Especially a challenge for small NGOs and volunteer organisations.

4.3.2.2. Enablers

To improve access to and utilisation of evidence, tasks seen as supportive are building staff capacities and providing the required resources (staff, finance, time) within the organisation, such as:

- Having a research/expert unit responsible for collecting and summarizing the latest evidence.
- Having access to relevant scientific publications.
- Building the evidence literacy of the team, i.e. the staff is able to find and identify good evidence and able to use this evidence as a sound basis for decision-making.

The staff involved have to be qualified and have to have enough of time to search for, synthesise and apply evidence as well as the capacities to do so. To have "Pra-academics" in the team having experience in hands-on implementation of programmes, but at the same time experience in rigorous research, are considered ideal staff qualities for getting the job done.

Besides building the required capacities within the organisation, networking and collaborations are seen as important enablers for translating research into practice and policy. The sharing of examples and experiences within networks, at conferences, etc., as well as regular contact with RIs and universities, is seen as an enabler for accessing the latest evidence. The incentives structures in general were discussed at the SDC research fair, i.e. incentive for policy-makers to take up research findings and the incentive for researchers to advise practitioners, to write policy briefs and to interact with different actors relevant for the research uptake. Up to now it was felt that researcher contributions to support translating research into practice are still very much dependent on the personal motivation of the individual researchers and the requirements by the donors.

Table 16: Responses from NGO representatives on translating research (selection)

Translation into practice and policy
"Access and capacities are required to use evidence"
"The questions are: what is good enough evidence? How to decide what to use? What is the next best evidence?"
"Struggle to create the space to reflect on evidence when people are busy in day-to-day jobs"
"Getting buy-in from all relevant staff to dedicate time for evidence collection, review and identification"
"Funding and program cycles make it hard to integrate learning"
"Cherry picking – from the results of evidence – can be tricky"
"Early on in program design the evidence should be collected: allocate time, create space in the planning process"

4.3.3. NGO–Research Institute Collaborations

The following conclusions on NGO-Research Institute collaborations are drawn from partnership experiences between different NGOs and RIs, and were analysed with a pre-defined framework of questions (see Annex 3).

4.3.3.1. Development and type of collaboration

Most of the collaborations developed over a period of several years and were initiated through personal relationships. The type of collaborations differed from case to case. The collaborations were largely based on an expert-consultant model as identified by Roper (2002); meaning that the NGO requested support from an RI and a contract was signed between the two parties. In one case the collaboration is on a scale from informal to very formal depending on the content of the work: informal is, for example, interpersonal exchange on programming and joint reflection on how to go about it; formal collaboration includes the signing of a contract with a clear set of outputs that have to be delivered by the research partner. The collaborations were between RIs and NGOs from the "North" and, in one case, the NGO collaborating with a local RI in the target country.

4.3.3.2. Process of implementation and results

All cases highlight that both sides had to provide inputs but received relevant outputs in return:

Table 17: Input and Output for NGOs and Research Institutes Collaborations

	NGO	Research Institute
INPUT	• Access to the field/ field experience • Access to data • Operational capacity/ infrastructure/ logistics • Local contacts with administration/ authorities/ population (close to all relevant stakeholders) • Information on context and culture	• Expertise • Methodology • Analytical skills • Implementation of research • Capacity building • Testing of innovations and new technologies • Research findings

	NGO	Research Institute
	• Support in conducting research (e.g. collecting data, organising interviewers) • Research question/ knowledge on research needs	• Credibility (recognized/respected institute) • External eye/ objectivity • Experience of other contexts • Funding or in-kind contribution • Access to their networks

	NGO	Research Institute
OUTPUT	• Objective assessment of project/ quality data and recommendations • Evidence based decision-making • Improved quality of programming • Learning/ Capacity building • Increased credibility • Received funding for participating in research project • Opens new funding opportunities • Publicity/ visibility • Results useful for advocacy work • Access to networks/ to other researchers	• Access to research questions • Access to research site • Access to data • Able to identify and test hypothesis • Access to different stakeholders/ networks • Access to relevant information and feedback on the topic, context, developed tools (e.g. questionnaire) • Publication/ dissertation • Capacity building for PhD students • Local contacts/ network for other research projects • Keeps contact with reality • Feeds into teaching • Costs lower in cooperation with NGO than stand-alone research

Most relevant and frequently mentioned outputs for the RIs were having access to the field (to their object of research), as well as the possibility to publish the results. At the same time, publications are also beneficial for the NGOs, as they increase credibility and can be used for both advocacy and seeking new funding opportunities.

Most frequently mentioned outputs by the NGOs were the impact of the research on the quality of their programming, i.e. receiving evidence-based information and recommendations for design/ redesign, for documenting programme results, for advocacy, for networking with relevant stakeholders, and additionally empowering local partners involved in the research process and who benefited from the results.

Although some of the NGOs may have had the capacity to conduct the research by themselves, they decided to contract an RI, not only to address their lack of time and human resources, but also to have a recognised and acknowledged research partner. It was stated that a report of a renowned RI will receive more public attention and will be more influential on policy makers, and thereby potentially enhance the impact of advocacy efforts.

In all cases except for one, the RI enabled the NGO to learn more about conducting research. The exception was the collaboration with an RI of the country in which the project was implemented. In this case the RI benefited from the research expertise and experience of the NGO and received continuous capacity building during each step of the research process.

The cost saving aspect was also highlighted by one RI, in that through collaboration, infrastructure costs can be shared with the NGO. At the same time, the NGO (as well as the health system of the country in general) is able to benefit from the research, for example by having reliable and relevant health data of the region and by building capacities of data collectors and other local relevant health personnel.

4.3.3.3. Supporting factors for the collaboration

The NGOs and RIs identified various supporting factors that facilitate a successful collaboration:

<u>Common understanding and clear and continuous communication:</u>

- Acknowledging and respecting the specificity of the other.
- Knowing what one is able to expect from the other side, clarifying different expectations.
- Not underestimating the difference in culture (NGO vs. RI; North vs. South; etc.).

- Being aware of the required resources and that investments are required from both sides (e.g. financial and time).
- Staying in close contact and communicating on a regular basis, to discuss problems openly, capitalizing on the possibility to also meet face-to-face.
- Investing enough time at the formalizing stage of the collaboration.

Leadership and staff:

- Staff having experience of “both sides,” i.e. staff from the RI having previous NGO experience and vice versa.
- Motivation and personal commitment from staff.
- Institutional support behind both parties.

Existing links between the two partners:

- Via other networks as well as personal relationships.
- Via a common history and development of the partnership over time.

Formalization:

- Signing of Memorandum of Understanding or other form of agreement.
- Clearly defining the objectives and expected outcome of the cooperation (“go into details – also for the budget”).
- Clearly defining the responsibilities and deliverables on both sides.
- Clear guidelines on overheads (“universities are very often used to receiving high overheads”).

Demand/ needs-driven:

- Demand from the field and if the research supports the work and mandate of the NGO.

An overall impression indicated was that trust between the partners is the key ingredient to a successful collaboration.

4.3.3.4. Hindering factors for the collaboration

Some factors, however, may also impede the collaboration, according to the representatives of NGOs and RIs:

Resources and required input:

- Limited funds (especially the allocation of funds for research is limited within NGOs).
- Difficult to clearly assess the input required by the NGO to support the research process (largely, the input in regard to time and human resources is higher than expected).

Capacities:

- NGO staff can be overwhelmed /overburdened by research, especially if they have no previous research experience.
- Capacities of NGOs to collect quality data.
- Understanding of NGO staff for rigorous research not always there, depends on their research knowledge and experience.

Time:

- Time pressure to start the project leaves not enough of time to discuss the project and planned design in detail.
- Not allocating sufficient time for the research process and knowledge exchange.
- NGOs interested in getting fast results (especially those working in a humanitarian context) versus the longer time horizon of researchers.
- Dilemma of not being able to use the data for advocacy before the official publication.

Different goals and expectations, different worlds and cultures:

- RIs aim for new information, new results and are pressured to publish for an expert public.
- NGOs' aim is to link the research to their work so that the results are applicable and relevant for their work or policy.
- NGOs' goal is to write the recommendations in a "simple language."

Situation in the field – reality on the ground:

- May not allow for rigorous research methods (e.g. due to security, ethical concerns (particularly in the case of RCT)).
- May make it difficult to host academic researchers in the field (e.g. expectations on what it means to be in the field versus reality; different security protocols and guidelines of NGOs and RIs).
- May lead to delays in the time line.

Lack of coordination and transparency:

- Possibility of limited transparency and coordination between all relevant stakeholders in the field (i.e. RIs, NGOs, donors etc.).
- Not involving all relevant stakeholders and taking all factors into account.

Memorandum of Understanding or other agreement:

- Never detailed enough to include all possible scenarios, i.e. formalisation alone will not ensure a successful collaboration.

4.3.3.5. Lessons learned from the case study

Lessons learned, as highlighted by the NGOs and RIs, are as follows:

1. Building confidence and trust takes time: allow sufficient time during the planning and formalization phase of the collaboration to get to know and understand each other. This will also clear the way to clear articulation of the respective expectations.

2. Close and frank communication is required at all levels, not only at the HQ but particularly in the field as well. As stated above, the formalisation alone (e.g. detailed MoU) will not be enough to solve all upcoming issues; good and regular personal contact and understanding is essential, especially as most difficulties only arise during the collaboration and are rarely if ever foreseeable.

3. Transparency: If several stakeholders are involved, it is important to collaborate closely and in a transparent way to avoid duplications, parallel structures and waste of resources.

4. Respect: it is important to respect each other and to take different views of the different sides seriously.

5. Important to involve all relevant stakeholders right from the beginning, as this will also support the translation of research findings into policy and practice.

6. Need to understand the local situation, to allow a realistic implementation of the planned research.

7. Time is a challenge impacting not only the research process as such but also limiting NGOs to make use of the benefits they have through collaborations such as participating in different networks, opportunities of knowledge sharing etc.

Table 18: Responses from NGO and Research Institute representatives on collaborations (selection)

Collaboration
"Collaborative relationships growing but still need a boost"
"To clarify different expectations, e.g. NGO wants to see the lives of their beneficiaries improved; research institute wants to generalize their research findings"
"Central to negotiate with the research institute on terms and conditions"
"Best partnership if each partner really knows what to expect"
"Acknowledging and respecting the specificity of the other"
"NGOs have to clarify their own picture of what a good partnership should look like"
"To start early to get information on research needs and on the opinions of the different stakeholders"
"To underestimate the situation in the field"
"Hard to host academic researchers in the field"
"It was also a learning experience for the project staff"
"Important to have such partnerships, as a NGO cannot have all the required expertise in house"

"Research institutes overvalue what one study will say – necessary also to take a larger view – have to wait over time. Researchers publish everything"

"The pressure within research institutes to publish has grown over the years, making it more difficult for research institutes to invest much time in collaborating with NGOs"

"It will just depend on the people who are involved and if they get along with each other"

5. Limitations of the thesis

The thesis faces the following limitations:

Purposive sample of NGOs and Research Institutes for questionnaire and case studies

The selection of the NGOs and RIs was purposive. The questionnaires were sent to the members of the MMI Network as well as to the organisations that participated at the MM Switzerland Workshop on NGOs and Research (June 2012).

The case studies were based on contacts via the MMI Network as well as from participation at workshops, and through recommendations of other organisations working in the field. The work that would have been involved in preparing a randomized sample of NGOs and RIs would not have been appropriate to the scope of a Master's thesis. Therefore, the presented findings provide an indication only, and no assumptions on their external validity are warranted.

Case studies on NGO-Research Institute collaborations

Only three of the case studies include the perspective of both sides of the collaboration, i.e. the NGO and the RI. The other case studies are based on the NGO perspective (10) or the RI perspective (3) only. Therefore, the results may be biased towards the opinions of NGOs or RIs. However, many of the persons interviewed had previous experience working for RIs or NGOs, and were therefore quite reflective of both sides while sharing their insights and experiences.

Specific types of collaborations between NGOs and Research Institutes

The thesis does not specifically look into issues and challenges around complex partnerships that may evolve complexities such as involving four parties (i.e. the

northern based RI, the international NGO, the southern based research partner and a national NGO). Moreover, it must also be acknowledged that collaborations differ where they are led by the RI, by the NGO or by a donor. These different constellations and the associated challenges have not been reflected while analyzing barriers and enablers for successful collaborations.

6. Discussion

Within the scope of this thesis, different methods (literature review, online questionnaire, case studies) were applied to identify and better understand the barriers, enablers and supportive tools for NGOs to generate, access and use research for their work. The results of the questionnaire and case studies are consistent with the findings of other studies as outlined in the literature review of the thesis. Key challenges for NGOs, whether for integrating research into their work, translating research findings into practice and policy or collaborating with RIs, are limited capacities in terms of time, staffing and expertise. However, at the same time, the perceived need for research and the uptake of findings is growing, and is supported, especially in larger NGOs, by an increase in investments and institutional-buy in. At the same time, RIs acknowledge the need to collaborate with NGOs to increase the uptake of research findings.

Collaborations are seen by both sides as an enabler for getting practice into research as well as research into practice and policy. The following section presents a discussion of the enablers and barriers for the different models (integration, translation and collaboration), as well as an overall discussion on tools supporting the different processes is presented.

6.1. Integration of research into NGO programming

The literature analysed confirms the impression, which is also consistent with the findings of the questionnaire and case studies, that resources in form of financing, staff, and time are a precondition for NGOs integrating research into their programming. If

funding is allocated, on the one hand to build the research capacity within the team and on the other hand included in the annual budget planning, this is the first step of integrating research into practice. Furthermore, research has to be part of the organisational culture, ensuring leadership support, and it should not be based on the motivation of some individuals, as otherwise the integration of research will not be sustainable over time and will not be streamlined within the organisation.

Figure 4: Summary of Findings: Barriers, Enablers, and Supportive Tools for integration research

The research cycle involves several steps, each requiring different expertise and resources. At the same time, NGOs are implementing their projects according to a project cycle, which also requires different expertise and resources for each of the phases.

The challenge, as highlighted by several NGO representatives, is to provide the required expertise and resources for each of the steps of the research cycle without neglecting the project as such in the process. If resources are tight, cuts are inevitable,

and for NGOs this means in general that allocations for research within project budgets are the first to be considered for elimination, in order to ensure continuity of programming. This puts NGOs in an impossible situation, and only if there are sufficient resources available in form of finance, staff and time do they feel that they are able to sustain the integration of research as an additional activity into their programming. Larger NGOs have an easier time escaping from this trap, as they have the capacity to respond to the need and demand of integrating research into their work, whereas smaller NGOs are occupied with daily business. This explains why the 90/10 research gap between the North and the South also applies to small and large NGOs, as was discussed during the MMI Network Workshop in 2010.[16]

The identified need to build the capacity of NGO staff on research also mirrors findings of other studies (cf. Zachariah et al. 2010; Royston 2011). DFID is providing £1 million of support (up to October 2014) to MSF and The Union in its three year project to develop and test appropriate training modules[17]. The approach taken is very promising (see also under Chapter 4.1.1.2.) as it is integrated into the participants' jobs, and they follow each step of the research cycle and apply them in practice during the training course. However, whether and to what extent they are prepared to invest in research and to what degree the in-house capacity is build (establishing a separate department, capacity building on specific skills, etc.) will depend on the strategic plan of each NGO. There are different options, and each NGO will have to decide the best way and the degree to which operational research is integrated into their practice based on their mission, vision, strategy and available resources.

6.2. Translation of Research into Practice

The complexity of translating research into NGO practice and policy is based on the different steps to be taken to do so: 1) identify the evidence needed; 2) find the evidence; 3) evaluate the quality of evidence; and 4) apply the evidence. For each of

[16] MMI Network Workshop on "Health System Research and NGOs: building up mutually beneficial partnerships". Antwerp 11, November 2010.
[17] See: http://projects.dfid.gov.uk/project.aspx?Project=202506

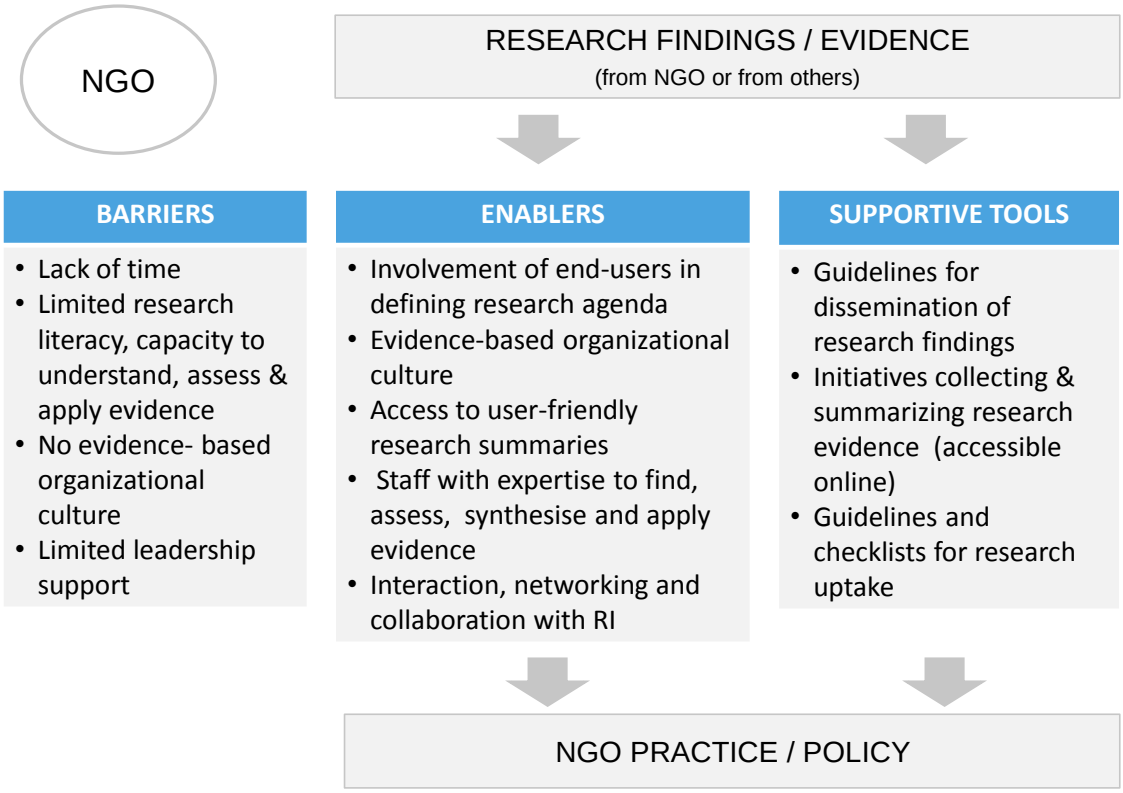
those steps, resources and capacities are required similar to those required to integrate research into NGO programming.

An evidence-based approach within the culture of an NGO is required, one that permits time to be up-to-date with the latest relevant research findings (that is, time to search for the latest research as well as time to read it). The staff involved also has to be qualified to search, synthesise and apply the evidence into their programming and policy ("evidence literacy" of the team). Ideally the NGO will have a research/expert unit responsible for collecting and summarizing the latest evidence relevant to the work of the organisation.

To have "Prac-academics" in the team, those having experience in implementing programs as well as rigorous research, is considered as very supportive. Sharing of experiences within networks, at conferences as well as regular contact and exchange with RIs and universities is also seen as an enabler. Champions within an organisation that are responsible for using available evidence is also a way to push towards evidence-based programming (cf. Nutley et al. 2007: 312).

Several stakeholders interviewed noted that both the use of evidence and the translation of research findings still very much depends on the individual motivation of the NGO employee and the researchers, as well as on requirements set by the donor agency. The need for incentives is discussed by a number of authors (e.g. McLaren 2013; Nutley et al. 2007): incentives for NGOs to use evidence, for policy-makers to take up research findings, for researchers to advice practitioners – most likely such an incentive would have to be established by the donors. Only then, if pressure is linked to financial commitments, can real change happen.

Figure 5: Summary of Findings: Barriers, Enablers, and Supportive Tools for translating research



6.3. NGO–Research Institute Collaboration

Collaborations between NGOs and RIs are beneficial to both sides. NGOs can benefit from the robust methodology applied by RIs, their technical expertise, and their objectivity. RIs benefit from direct access to the field, the ability to test theories, and the opportunity to engage in the application of research (ELRHA 2012: 8, 15). Challenges of collaboration lie within the different time lines, different incentive structures, and potentially diverse goals and expectations.

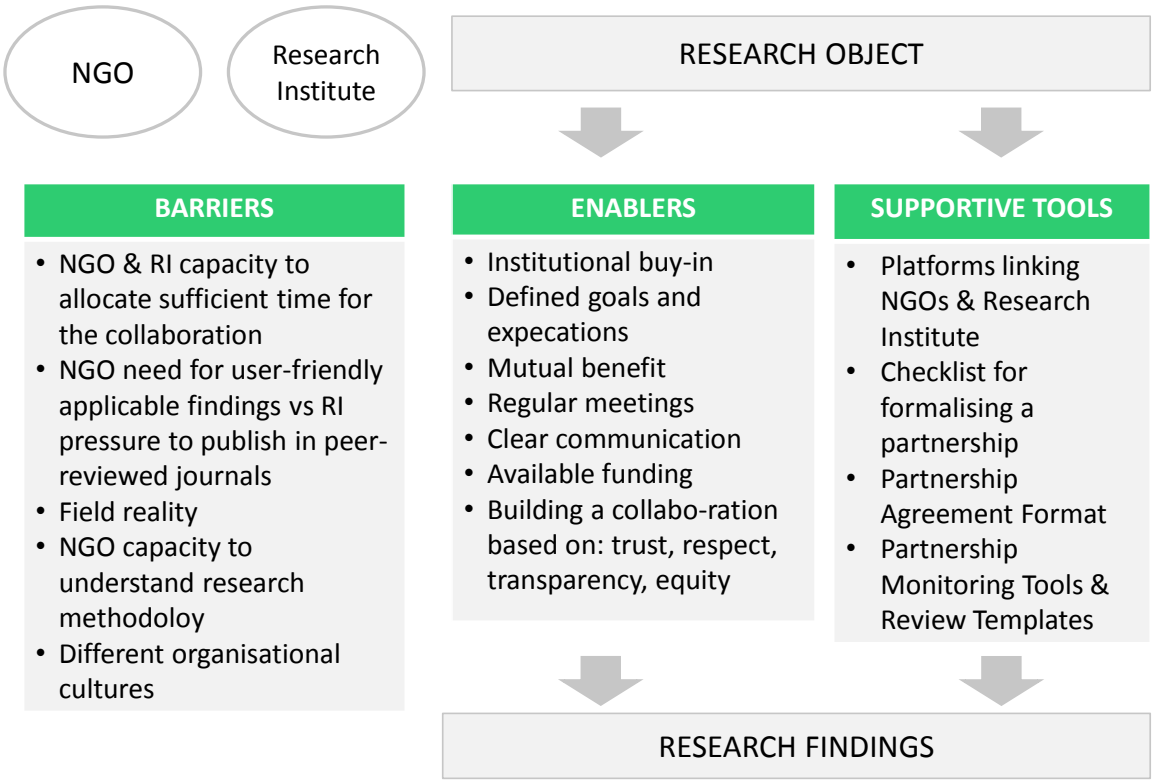
For the collaboration to be successful, it should be based on trust, respect, transparency and equality. To build a solid foundation for it, a time commitment, right from the start of discussing the potential for collaboration, is strongly advised.

The case studies underline the necessity that both parties have to be aware of the pros and cons of collaboration. The pros and cons have to be openly discussed and the goal should be to strive for the optimum that is mutually acceptable to both sides.

This implies that each partner “adds some water to the wine,” as one staff of an RI put it. The open discussion and communication has to start right from the beginning and continue throughout the research process. Especially at the outset, it is important that all staff involved sit down together, get to know each other, and talk about their expectations, in order to avoid surprises during the implementation of the research. The points highlighted to ensure a successful collaboration apply to any form of transdisciplinary approaches involving different stakeholders, and it is important to define effective ground rules for communication and decision making, as also outlined in various studies, as well as guidelines on forming and implementing collaborations (cf. ELRHA 2012/ WWF – The Partnership Toolbox 2009). The tools identified (see Annex 1) are able to support the process.

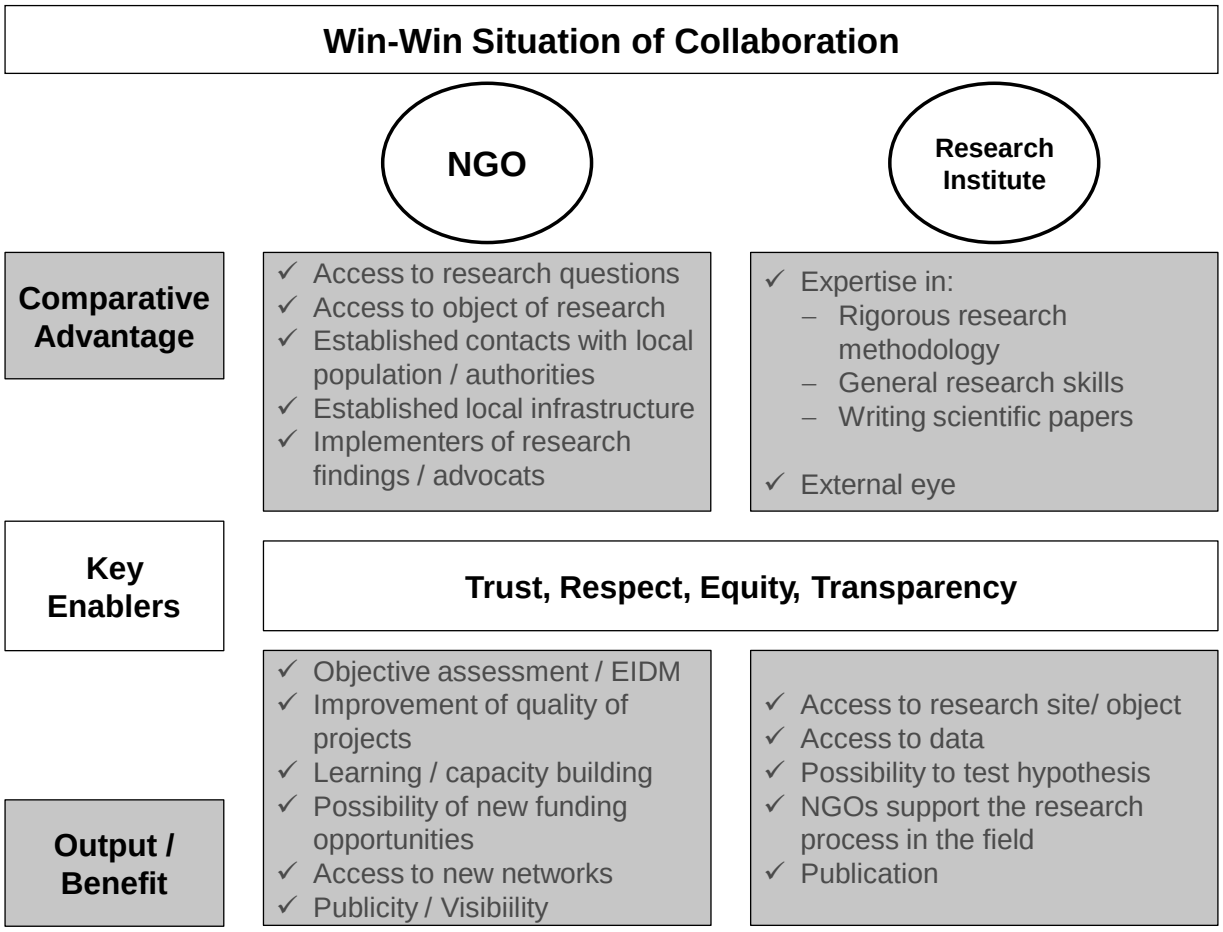
In the end, if there is a mutual interest and deliverables for both sides are well defined, it will depend mainly on the individuals who are involved in the collaboration, on the personal relationships and ways of working together, as one NGO representative stated.

Figure 6: Summary of Findings: Barriers, Enablers and Supportive Tools for NGO-Research Institute Collaborations



The best possible outcome of an NGO–RI collaboration is a win-win situation, each side complementing the capacities and capabilities of the other as well as each side benefiting from the collaboration (see table below).

Figure 7: Win-Win Situation of NGO-Research Institute Collaborations



6.4. Tools

Obviously, there is no magic tool to support NGOs in integrating operational research into their programming, translating research findings into policy and practice, and facilitating the development and implementation of NGO-RI collaborations. Nonetheless, tools are generally helpful references and can reduce the feeling of NGOs employees that they are constantly reinventing the wheel. At the same time, it is

important to provide the necessary resources so that the required knowledge base can be built within the NGO.

The main tool that NGOs are lacking, according to the questionnaire, is a database to facilitate access to relevant available evidence, finding suitable research partners, and serving as guidelines and training materials.

The NGO Toolbox (see Annex 1) is a first step towards such a toolkit; it provides a summary of tools for 1) integrating and conducting research; 2) translating research into NGO practice and policy; and 3) facilitating NGO-RI collaborations (see some examples of tools in Figure 4, 5, and 6).

Most of the tools outlined are not rocket science; especially tools supporting the development and implementation of NGO-RI collaborations. These are quite straightforward and common sense, including general points that are important for any collaboration between two parties.

However, what is challenging in practice is to access the individual tools as well as the available evidence without having to invest too much time. Everything is available online, but the various resources are scattered, and many different websites have to be consulted. There is as yet no "one-stop-shop" available that would allow NGOs to get a quick and thorough user-friendly overview on existing evidence and other supportive research tools. Since 2008, the research community has had a "Research Gate"[18] that is a scientific social network for researchers to present their research findings, to collaborate and ask questions (a sort of "Facebook-LinkedIn-Twitter mix" for researchers). A similar platform, however, with the focus of collecting and summarizing up-to-date quality relevant evidence for NGOs per topic, providing the opportunity for exchange and collaboration with RIs etc. would be very feasible for the NGO community. The development of such a "NGO-Research Gate," on the other hand, would require huge commitments and investments, and may therefore remain an idealist dream. The developed NGO-Research Toolbox (Annex 1) is a first attempt to

[18] Research Gate (http://www.researchgate.net/) was founded in 2008 by two physicians and a computer scientist. In 2013, already three million researchers used the platform. The total amount of money that has been invested so far in Research Gate is not disclosed. One of the investors is Bill Gates together with different capital investment funds having invested USD 35 millions into the platform in June 2013.

collect available tools that cover each step of the research cycle. It is not, however, comprehensive, and the challenge is to keep it up to date

7. Recommendations and Outlook

Based on the findings, several recommendations for further actions can be identified for NGOs, RIs, and Funding Agencies:

NGOs – from "doer" to "doer-thinker"

- Further shift required in the culture of NGOs from "doer" to "thinker-doer" (Peirson et al. 2012: 8) although, the emphasis should remain on their core task – "doer", i.e. implementation of programming, however including the "thinker" part as an additional important element that allows NGOs to design and develop their programmes according to the latest evidence. It further allows NGOs to test, improve, and scale up their programming, as well as to contribute to the wider knowledge base by integrating research into their work.
- NGOs could consider integrating a research component into funding requests for large scale programs that they submit to potential donors. They could further develop an internal research strategy for selected core areas of their work and explicitly seek funding for it, including building the expertise within the organisation.
- The leadership of NGOs has to acknowledge the need for evidence-based approaches and allocate the necessary resources (finance, protected time and adequate expert staffing).

Research Institutes – from "thinker" to "thinker-doer":

- As recommended for NGOs, RIs could likewise consider shifting their culture from "thinkers" to "thinkers-doers", i.e. to assess the relevance of their research as well as including the application of research findings as an important and essential part of the research process.
- They could invest more time in including all relevant stakeholders right from the beginning, i.e. process of identification of research needs and defining the research

question, as this would have an important and direct impact on the later application of research findings into practice and policy.

Funding Agencies - from "funders of results" to "funders of processes, results and research uptake":

- Although there is an increased interest on the part of donors to include research components in programming (e.g. SDC[19], DFID), more lobbying of donors is required to provide the necessary financial resources and to build in incentives for researchers to also include the translation of research findings into their work.
- The funds allocated by funding agencies could also include resources to support the process of collaboration (sufficient time for the scoping and formalization process of a relationship, resources for workshops and meetings, etc.) rather than merely the implementation of the research as such. The Director of SciDev.Net (Perkins 2013) also recommends allocating more resources to innovating and testing approaches of collaboration between scientists and NGO practitioners.
- However, apart from the funding for research and the process of collaboration, the NGOs must at the same time have the necessary resources to continue their programming, otherwise they will not have the necessary capacity to actively contribute to the process of collaboration and research.

[19] Statement by Mr. Dahinden, Director General SDC in March 2012: "I am convinced that research is a powerful tool, and that […] innovation is a 'must' if we want to achieve a more sustainable economic, social and environmental development in both rich and poor countries. That's why SDC will invest 72 million Swiss francs over the next 10 years in solution-oriented (applied) research on global issues in connection with development goals that targets both knowledge and application. And we expect that innovative approaches and solutions that work both at the local and global level are identified, developed, validated, and applied – for the benefit of the poor. This calls not only for interdisciplinary cooperation and transnational research partnerships, but it also implies a continuous iterative dialogue between science, policy and practice. And it requires, from the outset, a critical reflection on the potential impact of research and an anticipation of possible solution pathways. Research results will make a difference provided relevant national and international stakeholders are well aware of the issues at stake, and are provided with evidence, options, or recommendations for tackling 'real world' problems in a more systemic and holistic manner. Hence, effective communication and application of research results is a priority, and must be an integral part of the research activity."

- Supportive for NGOs would also be the availability of donor grants promoting the use of research and supporting the NGOs to develop mechanisms that improve the use of research findings in their work.

Collaborations between NGOs and RIs are necessary to bridge the gap between practice and research and to ensure the generation of relevant quality evidence and its application in practice and policy. There is a need for more opportunities for NGOs and RIs to meet, learn about each other's work and approaches, and explore possible collaborations. There are already some such initiatives. ELRHA, for example, has recently launched a new initiative, "Research for Health in Humanitarian crisis (R2HC)," with support of DFID and the Wellcome Trust[20]. Its goal is to increase the quantity and quality of collaborative research on public health challenges in humanitarian crises. Besides addressing the key research challenges in the humanitarian health sector, the initiative aims to deliver more insights and learning on collaborative partnerships between the academia and the NGO world.

There is also a need to further explore and analyse the required building blocks for an enabling environment within NGOs to be involved in the research process in a way that is efficient and cost-effective. Models to increase cost-effectiveness could include not only collaboration between NGOs and RIs, but also between NGOs building joint knowledge networks or sharing the costs of required research or learning units.

Last but not least, the vision of a "NGO-Research Gate" could be further explored with different stakeholders and social investors.

[20] See also: http://www.elrha.org/work/R2HC [accessed 27 June 2013]

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Nicole Moran

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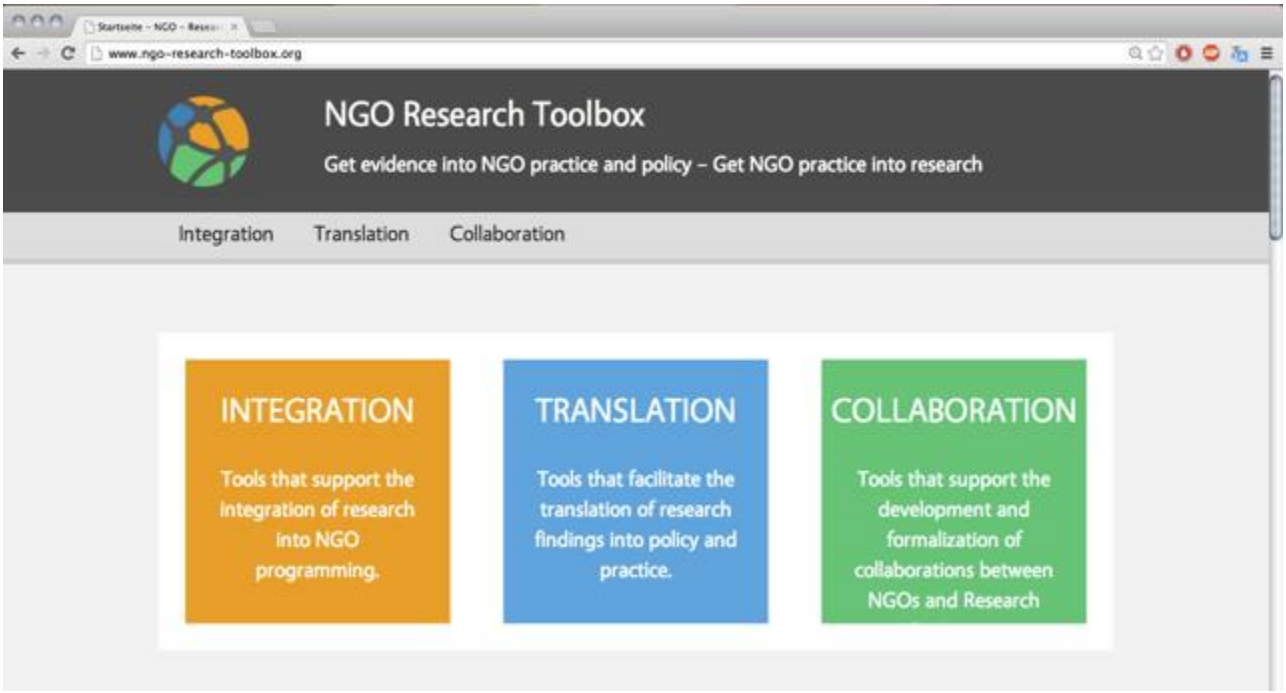
Annexes

Annex 1: Development of a web-based NGO-Research Toolbox

www.ngo-research-toolbox.org



INTEGRATION

Tools that support the integration of research into NGO programming

1. How to set up operational research in an NGO?
2. How and where to learn about operational research?
3. How to develop a research protocol?
4. How to obtain ethical approval?
5. How to do qualitative and quantitative operational research?

TRANSLATION

Tools that facilitate the translation of research findings into policy and practice.

Translating your own research findings:

1. How to write a scientific research paper?
2. How to submit a paper to a scientific journal?
3. How to prepare an abstract for a conference?
4. How to communicate your research findings?

Translating existing research findings:

1. How to find existing research findings?
2. Where to find summaries of existing research findings?
3. How to assess the power of evidence of research findings?
4. How to uptake research findings into NGO policy & practice?
5. How to share and exchange knowledge?
6. How to monitor and evaluate the uptake of research?

COLLABORATION Tools that support collaborations between NGOs and Research Institutes	1. What kinds of comprehensive tools are available? 2. How to find a research partner? 3. How to start collaborating with a Research Institute? 4. How to formalize collaboration? 5. How to implement and monitor collaboration?

Annex 2: Questionnaire to MMI Network Members

Dear Madam / Sir,

In close collaboration with the Medicus Mundi International Network (MMI), I am working on my Master Thesis that is supervised by Dr. Nicolaus Lorenz, Deputy Director Swiss TPH, Head of the Swiss Centre of International Health, and President of the MMI Network.

The topic is: **"Getting evidence into NGO practice and policy and getting NGO practice into research."**

The overall goal is to identify available supportive tools for NGOs to integrate research into their work and to translate research findings into programming and policy, as well as to define what kind of further tools have to be developed.

The MMI Network and I would really appreciate you sharing your valuable experience and knowledge with us.

The survey is divided into four short sections and includes structured and some open questions on the following:

A) Information on organisation: type, number of staff, annual budget

B) To do / integrate research: Experience of NGO with research and collaboration with research partners

C) To translate research findings: Experience of NGO to translate existing research findings into practice (e.g. programming / advocacy)

D) Tools: Available and required tools that facilitate the integration of research into programming or the translation of research

The survey should not take you longer than 10 minutes to complete. We would greatly appreciate if you could spare this time and kindly complete the following questionnaire by December 15: LINK

The submitted responses are confidential and it is not possible to link them to an organisation.

For concrete information about the research, the survey or any other questions, please contact me at nicole.moran@unibas.ch. For background information on the value of this work for the MMI Network, please refer to MMI Executive Secretary Thomas Schwarz, schwarz@medicusmundi.org.

Thank you, in advance, for your time and valuable information!

Kind regards,

Nicole Mora

A) Information on NGO

No	Identification	Response Categories
1	Type of Organisation	International NGO……...☐ National NGO…….....☐ Research institution with implementation activities.....…….....☐ Other please specify:
2	Core Work of organisation **MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE**	Direct project implementation……..…….....☐ Project implementation through partners …..…….....☐ Advocacy NGO…….……..…….☐ Other pls. Specify
3	How many staffs are working in your Headquarter?	Less than 10 staffs……..……...☐ Between 10 – 25 staffs……...☐ Between 26 – 50 staffs…...……☐ Between 51 – 100 staffs……..……...……☐ More than 100 staffs…...……☐
4	How many of the staffs at the HQ are Technical Advisors for specific sectors or cross-cutting issues?	____ persons
5	How many expat staff / international staff are in the field?	Less than 10 staffs……..☐ Between 10 – 25 staffs……...☐ Between 26 – 50 staffs……...☐ Between 51 – 100 staffs……☐ More than 100 staffs……...☐
6	How many local staffs are in the field?	Less than 10……☐ Between 10-25……☐ Between 26-50……☐ Between 51-100……..☐ More than 100……..☐
7	How many of the staffs in the field are Technical Advisors for specific sectors or cross-cutting issues?	____ persons

8	Annual Budget of NGO in EUR	Less than 1 Mio EUR…….....☐ Between 1 Mio – 5 Mio EUR…….☐ More than 5 Mio up to 10 Mio EUR…….……☐ More than 10 Mio up to 25 Mio EUR……☐ More than 25 Mio up to 50 Mio EUR….……..☐ More than 50 Mio up to 100 Mio EUR…….....☐ More than 100 Mio……..……☐

B) To do / to integrate research

Research is defined as operational research that is relevant for the work of NGOs and includes mainly: descriptive and cross-sectional studies (e.g. surveys of the population of interest), case control studies (use of comparison groups) and cohort studies (longitudinal). You may also include other research that your organisation defines as research (to be specified in the following question).

No	Question	Response Categories
9	Does your organisation have experience to integrate research within or in the context of your programs?	Yes …….☐ No…….☐ **IF NO GO TO Q: 19**
10	*If yes: what kind of research?* **MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE**	*Qualitative Studies ..…….....……*☐ *Cross-Sectional Studies (surveys)...……...……*☐ *Case-Control Studies*……☐ *Cohort Studies…..*……☐ *Laboratory Studies*…….……☐ *Randomized Control Studies…..*……☐ Don´t know*……...*……☐ *Other pls. specify:*
11	*Are you conducting the research together with another partner (e.g. Research Institute, consultant)?*	*Yes …..……...*……☐ *No …..……*……☐ *Depending on situation (sometimes yes / sometimes no)……...*☐ **IF NO GO TO Q: 17**

No	Question	Response Categories
12	*If yes: what kind of a research partner?* **MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE**	*Research Institute of the country / region where project is implemented….…….…….☐* *Research Institute in the „North“…… …….…….☐* *International Research Consultant …….……....☐* *Local Research Consultant …….…….……....☐* *Other: Pls. specify*
13	*Is it a formal relationship, i.e. did you sign a MOU / Contract?*	*Yes…..…….☐* *No…..……...☐* *Depending on the situation…….....……....☐* *Other please specify:*
14	*Did you approach the research partner for collaboration or did the research partner approach your NGO?*	*Research partner approached the NGO.……...☐* *NGO approached the research partner ……☐* *Don´t know….....……☐* *Other pls. specify*
15	*What are the main benefits of collaboration?*	
16	*What are key challenges of collaboration?*	**GO TO Q: 18**
17	*Why are you not conducting research in collaboration with an external research partner?* **MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE**	*In-house knowledge available ..…….☐* *No budget …..……...…….☐* *No interest …..……☐* *Don´t know…..……☐* *Other pls. specify*

No	Question	Response Categories
18	What are enabling factors for you / your NGO to integrate research? **MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE**	*Strategy for research* ……..……..☐ *Culture of research within organisation*…..……..……..☐ *Staff available for research*…..……...……..☐ *Budget available for research*…..……...……..☐ *Tools available to support research* …..……..☐ *Guidelines for research available in organisation*…….☐ *Existing partnership with Research Institute* …..……...☐ *Other pls. specify* *Don´t know*…..……☐
19	What is hindering you / your organisation to do / to do more research? **MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE**	*No commitment from leadership* …..……..……..☐ *Time* …..……..……..☐ *Finance*…...……☐ *Knowledge* …..……...☐ *No interest* …..……☐ *See no need* …..……☐ *No partner (institution)* …..……...☐ *Other pls. Specify* *Don´t know*…..……☐

C) To translate research findings into practice

Translation of research findings into practice: for example into activities i.e. programme development or publications, into policy, using it for advocacy.

No	Question	Response Categories
20	Does your NGO have experience to translate existing research findings (your own or from others) into practice?	Yes …..……..……..☐ No …..……..☐ **IF NO GO TO Q: 24**

No	Question	Response Categories
21	*If yes: are these your own research findings (i.e. results from your programmes) or research undertaken by others?*	*Own research findings…..……..……..☐* *Research by others ……..…..……..☐* *Both …..……..☐* *Other pls. specify*
22	*How was it translated into practice?*	*Project design ……..….☐* *Change in project activities …..……..……☐* *Used as argument for advocacy …..…….……☐* *Publication ……..……☐* *Other pls specify*
23	What is supporting you / your NGO to translate research findings into practice? **MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE**	*Data base available with relevant research findings (in the organisation) …..……..……..…..……..☐* *Summary of relevant research findings available……..☐* *Evidence-based approach within culture of organisation☐* *Staff available …..……..……..☐* *Budget available …..……..……☐* *Tools available …..……..……....☐* *Guidelines available in organisation…….…….……..☐* *Participation in trainings……..……..……..☐* *Participation in conferences / workshops……..☐* *Other pls. specify* *Don´t know…..……☐*
24	What is hindering you / your organisation to translate / to translate more research findings into practice? **MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE**	*No access to relevant research findings …..……..☐* *No time to search for research findings …..……..…..☐* *No knowledge where to find relevant research findings..☐* *Research findings not presented in an "understandable" way…..……..……..……..☐* *No knowledge how to apply findings …..…….……..☐* *Existing research not relevant for our programmes…….☐* *Partners / project staff in field not interested……..☐* *No priority. ……..☐*

No	Question	Response Categories
		Other pls. specify *Don´t know…..……☐*

D) TOOLS and Publications

Tools and resources for doing / integrating research or for translating research findings into practice: e.g. manuals, guidelines, Model TOR with research partner, summaries of relevant research findings, database etc.

No	Question	Response Categories
25	What kinds of tools (would) support you to do research or to translate research findings?	
26	Which of the tools are already available in your organisation?	
27	What kinds of tools still have to be developed?	
28	Did any of your or your partners research result in a publication?	Yes ……..☐ No……..……☐ Not doing any research……☐ Other please specify:
29	Any other comments?	

Thank you very much for your support!

In case your organisation has tools available that facilitate the integration of research or the translation of research findings, I would very much appreciate if you could share those with us. Depending on content and if you agree these tools could be mentioned as examples in the Master Thesis.

Also in case you / or your partner were able to publish any of your / or your partners research findings, I would appreciate if you could share the publication with us.

You can kindly send the tools / publications per mail to: nicole.moran@unibas.ch.

Thank you very much - your support is highly appreciated!

With kind regards, Nicole Moran

Annex 3: Analysis Framework for Case Study on NGO – Research Institute collaborations

- What type of collaboration?
- How did the collaboration evolve?
  - Existing one / new?
  - Who approached whom?
- How was it designed?
  - Roles and responsibilities?
- Implementation and results
- What went well? What did not go so well?
- Lessons Learnt

(Adapted from Mdee, Anna (2012): Case Study Framework)

Annex 4: Guiding question for case study on integration of research into NGO policy and practice and translation of research findings.

Integration:

- How is research integrated into NGO programming?
- What are the preconditions for integrating research?
- What are the benefits and challenges?
- What are the lessons learnt?

Translation:

- What are enablers to translate research findings into NGO policy and practice?
- What are barriers to translate research findings into NGO policy and practice?

Annex 5: Organisations contacted and interviewed

Organisations contacted: online questionnaire

1. ACHAP
2. action medeor
3. AGEH
4. AMCES

5. Cordaid
6. DWA Cuamm
7. CWGH, Zimbabwe
8. Enfants du Monde
9. EPN
10. Fatebenefratelli
11. Handicap International
12. Health Poverty Action
13. HealthNet TPO
14. IAMANEH
15. i+solutions
16. Médecins du Monde
17. medico international
18. medi-Cuba Suisse
19. Memisa
20. mission21
21. MM Italy
22. MM Poland
23. MM Spain
24. MM Switzerland
25. Smile Train Italy
26. Solidarmed
27. Swiss Red Cross
28. Tearfund
29. Terre des Hommes
30. WEMOS

NGOs and Research Institutes that contributed to the case studies

1. Cordaid
2. Fairmed
3. Handicap International

4. Harvard Humanitarian Initiative
5. HealthNet TPO
6. Helvetas
7. Institute of Tropical Medicine (Antwerp)
8. International Rescue Committee
9. MEMISA
10. MSF
11. NGO Network Tessin FOsit
12. Right To Play
13. Solidarmed
14. SSWARS – Ugandan NGO
15. Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries (KFPE)
16. Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETH) / Centre for Development and Cooperation (NADEL)
17. Swiss Red Cross
18. Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute: Dept. of Medical Parasitology / Infection Biology
19. Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute: Dept. of Epidemiology and Public Health

Annex 6: Participation at Workshops

1. Medicus Mundi Switzerland Workshop (June 20, 2012) on: „NGO-Praxis zwischen Aktivismus, Wirkungsorientierung und wissenschaftlicher Grundlage“, see: http://www.medicusmundi.ch/mms-en/services/mms/services/events/workshop2012

2. Medicus Mundi International Workshop (October 10, 2012) on: “Getting evidence into NGO practice and policy”, see: http://www.medicusmundi.org/en/contributions/conference-report/2012/getting-evidence-into-ngo-practice-and-policy

3. Second Global Symposium on Health System Research, Beijing, October 31 – November 3, 2012: Inclusion and Innovation towards Universal Health Coverage:

   http://www.healthsystemsglobal.org/GlobalSymposia.aspx; Satellite Session, October 31, 2012: "Getting real” through nongovernmental organization partnerships with policy-makers and researchers to test innovative, scalable solutions to implementation challenges: Community health systems research on reaching

neglected populations in the Latin America and Caribbean region, Africa and Asia, organised and presented by United States Agency for International Development.

4. KFH Information day on development and cooperation, Development and Cooperation Office, Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences and Arts, December 7, 2012:, www.kfh.ch/dc

   Panel Discussion on: Collaboration between Universities of applied sciences and NGOs in development and cooperation. An example and different perspectives from a development and cooperation agency, from the NGOs and from the field.

   Panellists: Rupa Mukerji (Helvetas), Dorothy Prezza (Federazione ONG Svizzera italiana FOSIT), Konrad Specker (SDC)

5. Research Fair: Results and Innovations from Transnational Research Partnerships (jointly organised by SDC and KFPE, June 5, 2013),

   http://www.kfpe.ch/download/RFA_Research-Fair_Einladung_web.pdf

   Thematic workshop at the research fair: Getting research and innovation into policy and practice. Guiding questions of the workshop:

   - What are prerequisites for getting research and innovation into policy and practice?
   - How can transdisciplinary and multi-stakeholder approaches further innovation?
   - What are strategic options to connect the fields of research, policy and practice?

   Moderation: Sandra Pfluger, swisspeace

   Panellists: François Münger (SDC), Massimo Monti (HE Arc Ingénierie, iMoMo), Kaspar Wyss, Swiss TPH

6. Webinar: Gathering and Using Evidence: Assessing the needs of practitioners, June 27, 2013 – organized by INTRAC.

   Objective of the webinar:

   - provide space for discussing, learning and sharing amongst practitioners on research and evidence
   - explore the challenges facing practitioners around research and evidence
   - consider how to address the challenges, including through new capacity building, activities and materials

   Focus of the webinar:

   - Understanding and engaging with evidence and research
   - Accessing existing evidence and research
   - Designing and producing evidence and research

- Using, adapting and managing evidence and research for different needs
- Assessing the quality of research and evidence
- Obstacles to using evidence and research
- Skills and capacity gaps around research and evidence
- Ideas for addressing obstacles and gaps