



RESEARCHER/PRACTITIONER RELATIONSHIPS FOR VAWG RESEARCH

2017 SVRI PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP

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AGENDA

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|-------------|--|
| 9:00-9:30 | Introductions, overview of agenda, participant expectations |
| 9:30-10:00 | Introduction to researcher/implementer partnerships presentation |
| 10:00-10:30 | Small group discussions on case studies |
| 10:30-10:45 | Tea / Coffee Break |
| 10:45-11:15 | Case studies plenary discussion |
| 11:15-12:15 | Panel discussion and questions |
| 12:15-12:30 | Draft guidance for VAWG research partnerships |

OBJECTIVES

1. Define academic / practitioner partnership models and different perspectives
2. Outline key challenges that may emerge throughout academic/practitioner relationship during different points in the research process
3. Understand mitigation steps that may reduce challenges and improve understanding and communication between partners

PERSPECTIVES

- “Academics should expect some hostility, scepticism, not assume a humanitarian organisation is interested in the academic theory behind their work or think their research is relevant. Humanitarian workers will always want to simplify things and want tools. Answers. They will think you are being over-analytical and naïve. That you don't understand reality. Humanitarians should be aware academics often come with a critique head. They may have stereotypes of humanitarians - well meaning missionaries who don't understand theory of the bigger picture.”

WHY PARTNER?

- Ultimate aim of creating more sustainable, scalable, and effective programs and policies to reduce violence against women and girls
- Research partnerships support:
 - Adjusting programs as needed to maximize effectiveness of models
 - Evidence-based programming
 - Advocacy for policy changes and strengthened funding streams

WHY PARTNER (MORE REALISTIC DRIVERS)?

- Funding opportunities and donor requirements
 - Catalyst for innovative relationships, research questions, and designs
 - Constraints on relationship models or when donors set the research design or questions

DIFFERENT MOTIVATIONS

Program Staff

- External, unbiased evaluation of program
- More robust understanding beyond process evaluations
- Complement their expertise with methodological research rigor
- Document lessons learned and translate to the global community
- Respect of academic institutions to add leverage to their learning, advocacy, and policy work

Academics

- Access to field, communities, data to test research ideas
- Ground research design in local realities and challenges
- Demonstrate relevance of research ideas
- Salary support
- Building reputation of institution as one who partners with organizations for applied and actionable research

HISTORY OF PARTNERSHIPS

- Gap between academics and practitioners started to be recognized in the 1950's (US)
- In the 1960's, more debates on importance, relevance, and added value that research brings to the table
- Resource constraints and evidence-based policies and practice starting to be highlighted
- Donors requiring evaluations or more rigorous research for GBV and other complex social or development related issues

A RECENT EXAMPLE

- Raising Voices & LSHTM: Evaluations for SASA! and Good Schools Toolkit
 - Zimmerman, et al 2015. Rigged or rigorous? Partnerships for research and evaluation of complex social problems: Lessons from the field of violence against women and girls.



STAGES OF RESEARCH

KEY CONSIDERATIONS, VALUES, INCENTIVES, AND PRIORITIES



SETTING UP A PARTNERSHIP-CONSIDERATIONS

- Scoping process (expertise, field / operational experience, institutional reputation etc.)
- Managing turnover of program field staff (especially for humanitarian settings)
- Perceived “status”, “value”, and “professional identities” of programmers vs. researchers
- Roles, communication lines, responsibilities, and decision-making
 - Research capacity building for practitioners / Operational understanding for researchers

RESEARCH DESIGN CONCEPTUALIZATION

- Effectiveness vs. operational learning research questions – what is valued more?
- Spillover and diffusion – good or not?
- Study designs – to RCT or not RCT?
- Timing of evaluation versus readiness of program to be evaluated?
- How do we stay accountable to the feminist perspective?

IMPLEMENTATION OF RESEARCH

- Implementing the program versus implementing the research priorities
 - (Donor driven?) Timeframes and program or research delays
 - Communication with communities
 - Attendance / participation – the more the better, but what's the motivation?

IMPLEMENTATION OF RESEARCH, CONT'D

- Ethical considerations
 - IRB review timelines and local approval / community advisory boards
 - Informed consent (academic institution perspectives versus on the ground considerations)
 - Randomization and communication with communities
 - What is and is not appropriate to ask regarding experiences of violence or other sensitive experiences? How should they be asked?
 - What happens to the relationships in the community long after the researchers have left?

IMPLEMENTATION OF RESEARCH, CONT'D

- Logistical considerations
 - Hosting researchers, data collection teams, student interns, and more
 - Security concerns
 - Who manages who?

DATA ANALYSIS

- Understanding quantitative data analysis
 - P-values, confidence intervals, and interpreting change
 - Incorporating a feminist analysis
- Validation workshops as best practice
- Ensuring data triangulation with monitoring data
- Qualitative data analysis
- Cost analysis –
 - How do we measure time use effectively and accurately?

PUBLISHING AND DISSEMINATION PRIORITIES

- Products
 - Reports / briefs or other formats for lay audiences vs. peer-reviewed articles *REGARDLESS OF THE RESULTS*
 - Timeframes, languages, and open access
 - Establishing authorship (who, under what criteria, etc.)
- Research uptake strategies
 - From global to local - and what about local to global?
 - How do we create bidirectional relationships?
 - Science communication by researchers

METRICS OF SUCCESS?

NOT JUST A QUALITY REPORT FROM A RIGOROUS EVALUATION

PRACTITIONERS

- Did the NGO find the process of inquiry and the results useful and did the NGO *use* the research (results, recommendations, areas for further study)?
- Did more people within the NGO become interested in or directly engaged with the research effort? Did they want to continue the collaboration?
- Did practitioners feel valued and gain confidence in their research abilities?
- Was an environment created where difficult issues could be raised and dealt with in a systematic and professional manner?
- Did those who participated in the experience want to share that learning outside the agency with clients, peer organizations, or others?

ACADEMIC PARTNERS

- Is there a plan for future collaborative efforts with the NGO or those they referred academic to?
- Did the partner improve ability to elicit information and create actionable knowledge? Did they create solutions / improvement areas in collaboration with organization?
- Did the research contribute to broader discourse between academia and practitioners?

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CASE STUDY SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

- Case Study 1
 - Designing community-based impact evaluations for VAWG interventions
- Case Study 2
 - Understanding programmatic constraints and ethical concerns from different perspectives for VAWG research (adolescent girls)
- Case Study 3
 - Developing meaningful relationships for VAWG research

PANEL DISCUSSION

- Mark Canavera, Child Protection in Crisis Learning Network, Columbia Mailman School of Public Health
- Giovanna Lauro, Promundo
- Elizabeth Rowley, PATH
- Pamela Tuyott, International Rescue Committee - South Sudan
- Fred Wanyonyi Wafula, CARE - Kenya



THANK YOU

- Provide an evaluation on Whova!