LASER PULSE

Long-term Assistance and Services for Research (LASER) Partners for University-Led Solutions Engine (PULSE)

GUIDING QUESTIONS TO PLAN FOR RESEARCH TRANSLATION:

A WORKBOOK TO DEVELOP A RESEARCH TRANSLATION STRATEGY, AN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN, AND A MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN FOR RESEARCH IMPACT IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

SUPPLEMENT TO AGREEMENT NO. AID-7200AA18CA00009
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About LASER PULSE

LASER (Long-term Assistance and Services for Research) PULSE (Partners for University-Led Solutions Engine) is a $70M program funded through the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) Innovation, Technology, and Research (ITR) Hub that delivers research-driven solutions to field-sourced development challenges in USAID partner countries.

A consortium led by Purdue University, with core partners Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Indiana University, Makerere University, and the University of Notre Dame, implements the LASER PULSE program through a growing network of more than 3,000 researchers and development practitioners in 74 countries.

LASER PULSE collaborates with USAID missions, bureaus, independent offices, and other local stakeholders to identify research needs for critical development challenges, and funds and strengthens the capacity of researcher-practitioner teams to co-design solutions that translate into policy and practice.

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This workbook is based on a study carried out by LASER PULSE called Research Translation for International Development: A literature review, framework, and guide to developing a research translation strategy (Riddering et al., 2021). The study included an extensive guide on developing a research translation strategy and was the basis for this workbook's content. The full study can be found on the USAID Development Expertise Clearinghouse (DEC) *here*.

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Introduction

Why is this workbook needed?

We present this workbook to provide a concise process to develop a research translation strategy and plan for evidence utilization in international development. Academic researchers, development practitioners, and donors can use this workbook to strategize and plan for research impact. Scholars, donors, and practitioners call for development research to have an impact beyond academia and connect to policy and practice; this workbook provides a process to develop a research translation strategy, plan for the implementation of a research translation project, and plan to monitor and evaluate research impact.

What is research translation?

Research translation is a concept that broadly means applying research in practice; it can be leveraged to harness evidence to address complex problems like poverty, food insecurity, or climate change. These global development challenges transcend boundaries between academic disciplines and between research and practice. Research translation can close the gap between evidence production and evidence utilization. A research translation project is a term we use in this workbook to refer to any project that aims to apply evidence in practice or policy.

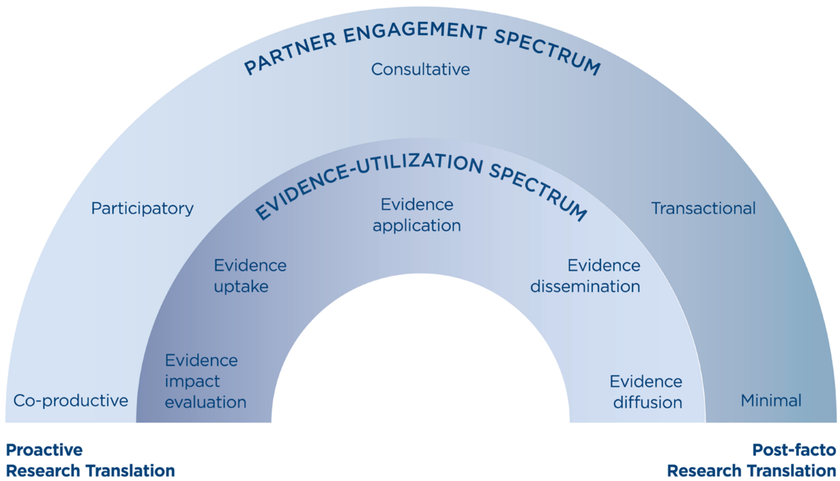
What is a research translation strategy?

A research translation strategy describes the goal and objectives of a research translation project. Developing a research translation strategy ensures that all team members understand the challenge that research will address, the audience for the research translation and the overall goals of the project. A strategy will help a team specify what the project will do and make explicit how the project will have impacts. Based on a literature review of 93 peer reviewed articles in four disciplines that discuss research translation, we found that planning for evidence use and partner engagement increases the likelihood of producing relevant research to influence policy and practice *(Riddering et al., 2021)*.

What are different approaches to research translation?

Research translation encompasses a continuum of approaches that utilize research evidence and form collaborations between researchers and practitioners. Through our literature review, we created a framework to illustrate this range of approaches called the Research Translation Continuum (Figure 1). As you design and implement your research translation strategy, reflect on your context to identify where your project is located on the continuum.

Figure 1. The Research Translation Continuum illustrates the range of approaches between proactive and post-facto translation and includes a partner engagement spectrum and evidence-utilization spectrum.



What are different ways to use evidence?

In our Research Translation Continuum, we identified five reference points of evidence utilization on the **evidence-utilization spectrum:** impact evaluation, uptake, application, dissemination, and diffusion. The reference points on the left indicate substantial forethought and planning to use evidence created through the research and substantial efforts to make it readily accessible to practitioners. In contrast, the reference points on the right indicate minimal forethought to create useful evidence and minimal efforts to make it readily accessible to practitioners. Tailor your research translation strategy and plans to reflect the approach that is best for your context.

Evidence impact evaluation: Practitioners and researchers create evidence in close collaboration with one another, plan for evidence use, and plan to evaluate the impact of uptake.

Evidence uptake: Researchers and practitioners invest significant forethought and planning for research translation from the beginning of the research lifecycle. Results are contextualized and tailored to the needs of the end users.

Evidence application: Researchers conduct research for application and create practical products from the research. Practitioners are aware of the research, but do not have decision-making power to shape it.

Evidence dissemination: Researchers publish their research through academic channels and disseminate it to practitioners. There is minimal forethought to translate research.

Evidence diffusion: Researchers publish their research through academic channels with the hope that practitioners will utilize it.

What are different ways to engage partners?

We also identified five reference points on the **partner engagement spectrum**: co-productive, participatory, consultative, transactional, and minimal. The reference points on the left indicate a deep and ongoing engagement between researchers and practitioners, while the reference points on the right indicate the least amount of engagement and collaboration between academic researchers and practitioners. Tailor your research translation strategy and plans to reflect the approach that is best for your context.

Co-productive engagement: All partners are engaged in a mutually beneficial and equitable partnership with a bidirectional exchange of ideas, information, and knowledge. Can be synonymous with co-creation.

Participatory engagement: Researchers and practitioners collaborate with the intention that the research translation is tailored for and includes participation with the practitioners.

Consultative engagement: One actor decides the intention for the research translation project, and the other provides feedback. Researchers consult with practitioners or practitioners consult with researchers.

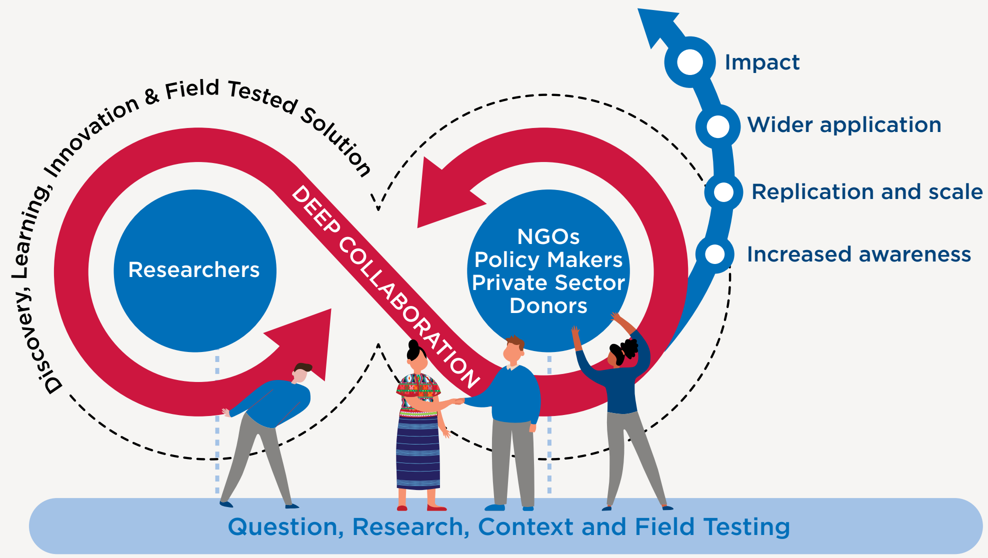
Transactional engagement: A one-off engagement or limited interactions between researchers and practitioners. Researchers seek input from practitioners to inform their research or practitioners seek evidence from researchers.

Minimal engagement: Marginal interaction between practitioners and academic researchers. Researchers or practitioners can lead the research, but it is carried out independently.

What research translation approach does LASER PULSE use?

LASER PULSE developed an approach to research translation called Embedded Research Translation (ERT). It is defined as an iterative co-design process among academics, practitioners and other stakeholders in which research is intentionally applied to a development challenge (Figure 2).

Figure 2: The LASER PULSE Embedded Research Translation model.

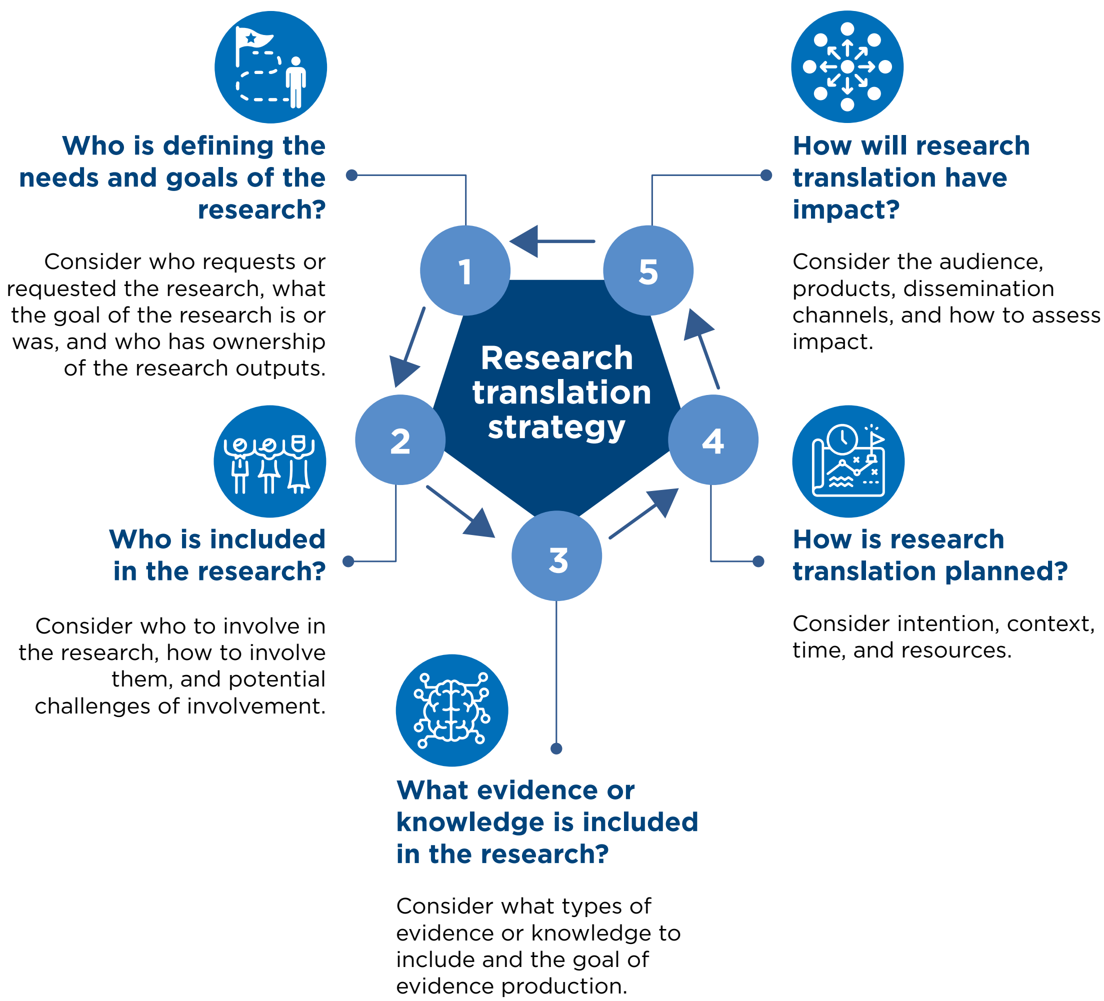


The central aspect of the ERT approach is its ability to bring together academics, researchers, policymakers, donors, nongovernmental organizations, civil society, and the private sector to develop research-driven solutions to global development challenges. The underlying philosophy of ERT is that research translation is most effective when it is embedded across all phases of the research project—from identifying the research topic to disseminating the findings for broader impact and scale. Consult the LASER PULSE website to read more about the *ERT model* and access *resources* to support its implementation.

How to develop a research translation strategy

From our literature review, we generated a series of five guiding questions to assist researchers, policymakers, practitioners, government agencies, and/or any entity interested in harnessing evidence to inform practice. The Guiding Questions are the basis for this workbook as they can facilitate discussion and reflection on how best to approach research translation for a given context. We suggest you work with a team of researchers, practitioners, and end users to discuss the Guiding Questions. Each guiding question has several considerations and sub-questions to spark conversation about different elements which can influence research translation strategy design (Figure3). After your team has a strategy, the other worksheets can be filled out as needed to achieve research uptake, adoption, and impact.

Figure 3. The five Guiding Questions to consider to inform the design of a research translation strategy.



What influences a research translation strategy?

In our research, we found that research translation is heavily influenced by an increase or decrease in four interrelated factors: intention, partnership, context, and resources (Figure 5).

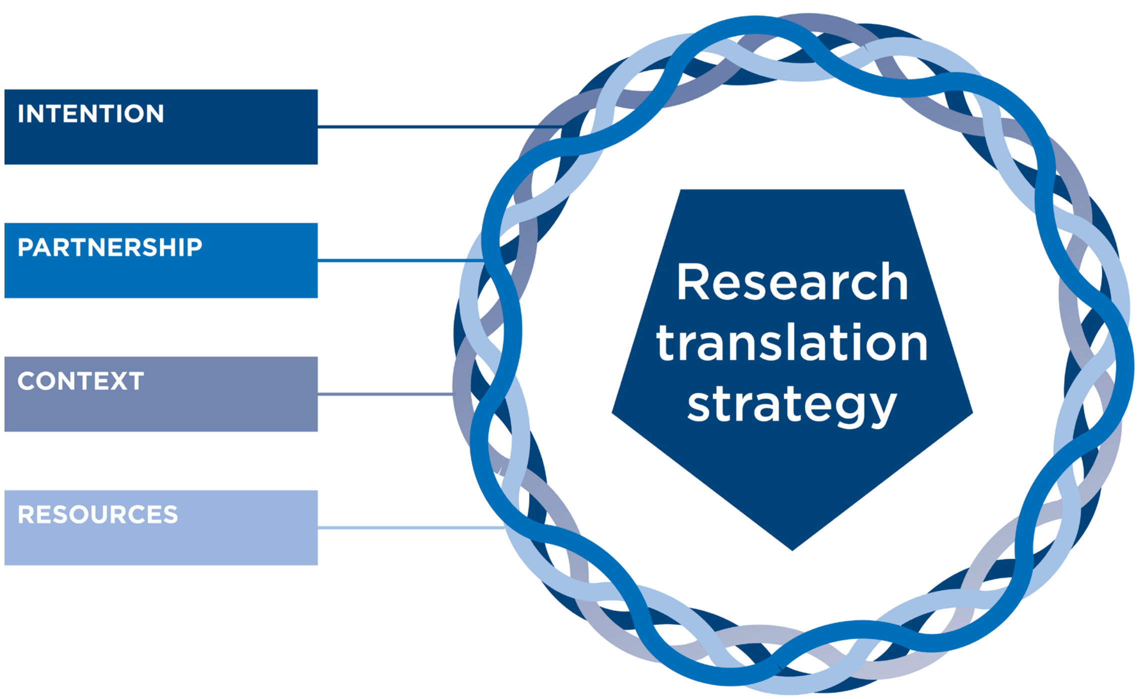
Intention: The degree of forethought and planning for evidence use and research utilization. It includes the motivation behind the evidence collection and the plan for evidence use.

Partnership: The level of investment between academics and practitioners in engaging as partners in a research translation project.

Context: Understanding of environmental, social, economic, and political circumstances that shape the capacity for translation and the potential for adoption. The success of an intervention in one context does not guarantee adoption or impact in another context.

Resources: The investment of financial and human resource support needed for research translation to have an impact on development policy or practice.

Figure 4. The four intertwined factors that shape research translation strategy design, and the Guiding Questions that help research teams consider their influence.



Together, these factors are intertwined and influence the overall conditions, design, implementation, and outcomes of research translation. The Guiding Questions consider the influence of the four factors and incorporate the best practices identified in our research.

How to use this workbook

This workbook focuses on harnessing the Guiding Questions to develop a research translation strategy. It is intended for anyone who plans to use research evidence to inform policy or practice. By reflecting on the five Guiding Questions and sub-questions, this resource guides you through a process to develop a research translation strategy (Figure 5). The worksheets do not provide answers to these questions but, instead, provide a framework to guide discussions with partners or stakeholders and increase the likelihood of research impact.

1. **Set up a workshop** to discuss the Guiding Questions and develop a research translation strategy. Use the *research translation design workshop worksheet* as a guide for planning. Consider conducting a *stakeholder analysis* to create an invitee list.

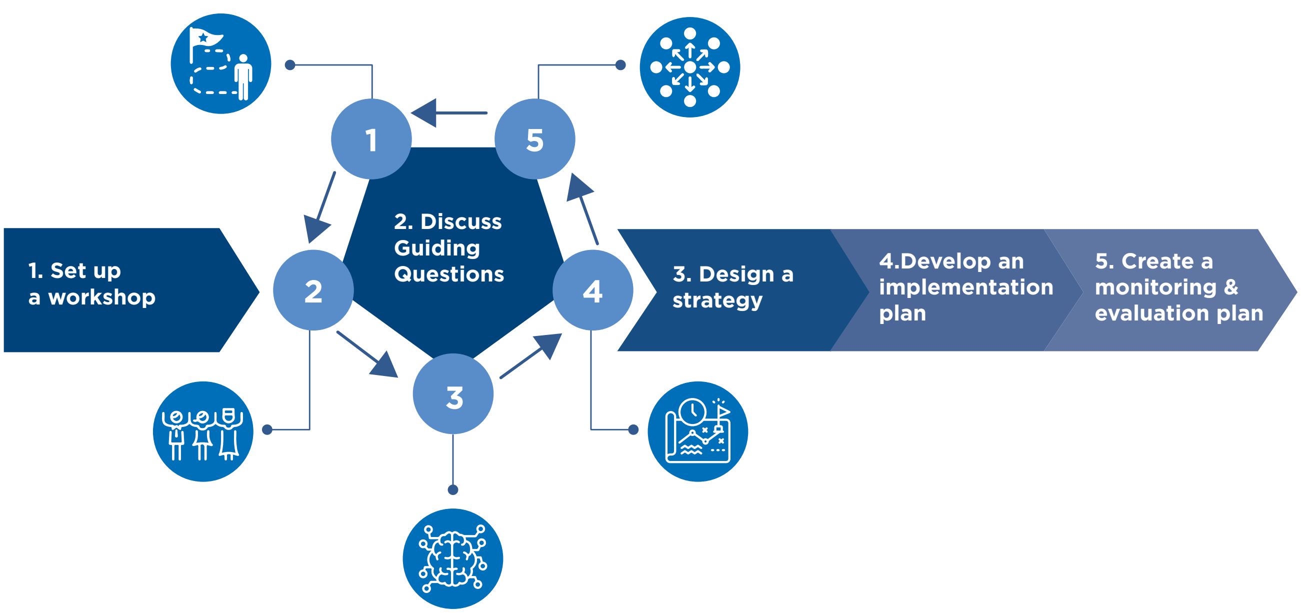
2. **Discuss the Guiding Questions.** Choose a workbook for your situation – *proactive research translation workbook* or *post-facto research translation workbook*. Reflect on the sub-questions, and create action steps as you go through the questions.

3. **Design a research translation strategy** based on the discussion and action steps identified in Step 2. Fill out the *research translation strategy template*.

4. **Develop an implementation plan.** Plan for research translation with the use of the *implementation plan worksheet*.

5. **Create a monitoring and evaluation plan.** Set up a system to evaluate the impact of your project with the use of the *research translation monitoring and evaluation worksheet*.

Figure 5. Process for using the Guiding Questions to develop a research translation strategy, implementation plan, and monitoring and evaluation plan for research impact.



Step 1: Set up a workshop

The first step to design and plan for research translation is to set up a workshop to discuss the Guiding Questions and draft a research translation strategy. The *Research Translation Strategy Design Workshop Worksheet* can be tailored to fit the scope and needs of the workshop for your project. Here are some guidelines to consider as you start thinking about the number of partners to invite, hours to set aside, and participants to include:

- **Set an agenda.** Be flexible and realistic about what you can and cannot do. The minimal agenda should be to discuss the guiding questions and come to an agreement on your research translation strategy. If you have more time, focus the first workshop on the Guiding Questions and strategy design, then plan for additional workshops to address developing an implementation and monitoring and evaluation plan, inviting the appropriate partners as needed.
- **Remember basic workshop protocol.** Set ground rules at the beginning, discuss expectations, keep time, and ensure regular breaks.
- **Conduct stakeholder analysis to identify attendees.** Participants should include members of the research team, practitioners with contextual knowledge, and end users. Aim for a representation of researchers, practitioners, stakeholders, genders, and geographies. A *stakeholder analysis* can help to identify invitees.

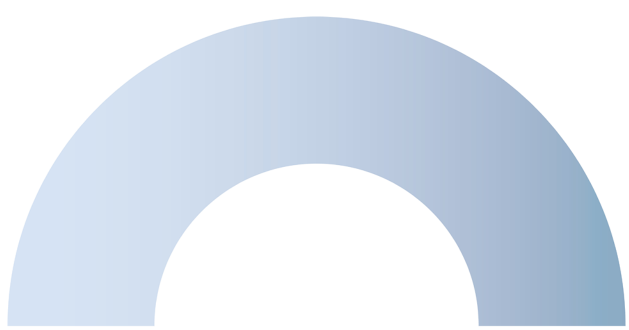
Step 2: Discuss the Guiding Questions

Next, discuss the Guiding Questions in the workshop. The questions, considerations, and sub-questions are a guide; you can tailor the discussion to your context. There are two sets of Guiding Questions: the first for situations in which you will collect data—called pro-active research translation —and the second for situations in which you have collected data—called post-facto research translation.

- **Proactive research translation** involves intending and planning for evidence utilization before the research begins and ensuring continuous partner engagement throughout the research process. Embedded Research Translation projects are proactive because evidence will be collected with the intent to inform policy or practice.
- **Post-facto research translation** involves identifying and applying evidence to policy or practice after the research is conducted. It may not involve engagement with partners or those parties who carried out the research.

Even though this step presents as a binary option, in practice most research translation approaches fall along the continuum between proactive and post-facto research translation (Figure 6).

Figure 6. The Research Translation Continuum.



For example, a team could begin to develop a research translation strategy based on the Post-facto Guiding Questions and think they have a complete evidence base. But after discussing the Guiding Questions, they could determine that they need to collect more data to reach their goal and impact.

Select the statement that is most relevant to your situation.

- **I plan to collect data or am in the process of collecting data.**
  - If this describes your project, *then click here* to follow the questions and worksheet for a pro-active research translation approach.
- **I have collected data or have evidence**.
  - If this describes your project, *then click here* to follow the questions and worksheet for a post-facto research translation approach.

The Guiding Questions should initially be discussed in the design and planning phase of your project. Furthermore, the questions should be reviewed throughout the project because new information or learning can inform and improve the research process and research translation strategy. We suggest you print them off and take notes throughout the workshop.

Each set of guiding questions contains two parts: first a brief explanatory text for each question and second a worksheet to fill out during the discussion. There are four columns in the worksheet:

- **Consideration:** Each guiding question has two to six considerations that broadly need to be taken into consideration.
- **Sub-questions:** Each consideration has several sub-questions to spark conversation about different elements that can influence research translation strategy design.
- **Answers:** Use this space to jot down any points discussed.
- **Action steps:** Use this space to note points that need to be added to the work plan or to the research translation strategy. Note: not all considerations will have action steps.

Step 3: Design a research translation strategy

After completing a discussion of the Guiding Questions, you will have a strong foundation to inform the development of your research translation strategy. Use the answers and action steps identified in the Guiding Questions to fill out the *Research Translation Strategy Worksheet*. The strategy should be a short document that enables all partners to clearly understand why and how the project will be carried out. It will condense key points discussed in the Guiding Questions. It is a broad strategy to determine what you want to achieve in your research translation project. This worksheet will connect the activities with desired outcomes and measurable indicators. We recommend that you fill out the columns in this order:

1. Outcomes

2. Indicators

3. Outputs

The columns are interrelated, but this order will enable you to think about research impact first and ensure that you have included the activities required to achieve your goals.

Step 4: Develop an implementation plan

Based on the Guiding Questions discussion and research translation strategy, plan for the implementation of your research translation project. Add the action steps and activities identified from the Guiding Questions and the Research Translation Strategy with the research activities to create a comprehensive *Research Translation Implementation Plan* for the entire project. Identify the months in which the activity will occur. Add any budget considerations for activities. Review and update the plan as needed. The indicator column in this worksheet will be the first column in the next worksheet.

Step 5: Create a monitoring and evaluation plan

To ensure that research uptake and impact is more likely, it is important to monitor activities throughout a research translation project and evaluate them at the end. *The Research Translation Monitoring and Evaluation worksheet* enables the identification and tracking of indicators throughout a project. The worksheet includes determining the data collection methods and frequency, establishing the baseline for the indicators, and assessing the change in indicators over time.

Steps 3, 4, and 5 can be completed in a cyclical and iterative manner to update and refine the strategy, plan, and evaluation comprehensively. We recommend that you work collaboratively, in a small group, with researchers, practitioners, and key stakeholders to fill out as many of the worksheets as possible. After completion, your research translation strategy, implementation plan, and monitoring and evaluation plan should be revisited regularly. These important project management tools can be updated as part of regular team meetings.

Annex of Tools

1 Set up Workshop	2 Discuss Guiding Questions	3 Design Translation Strategy	4 Develop Implementation Plan	5 Create M&E Plan
• *Research Translation Strategy Design Workshop* • *Worksheet Stakeholder analysis*	• *Guiding Questions for Proactive Research Translation* • *Guiding Questions for Post-facto Research Translation*	• *Research Translation Strategy Worksheet*	• *Research Translation Implementation Plan Worksheet*	• *Research Translation Monitoring & Evaluation Plan*

Research Translation Strategy Design Workshop Worksheet

Why?

As [Project Name] aims to translate research to address a development challenge, we require a clear, realistic strategy for effective project management to achieve research impact. [Edit as needed and add appropriate contextual information.]

What and what for?

The design workshop will bring key stakeholders together to develop the research translation strategy, with a particular focus on detailing the goal, audience, outputs, actions, and indicators for research translation. By the end of the Research Translation Strategy Design Workshop, participants will have:

- [Amend as needed for each workshop based on scope and goals.]
- Considered who to include in research translation.
- Identified the evidence or knowledge to be included in research translation.
- Defined the goal of research translation.
- Deepened their understanding of the project's programming and operations components.
- Developed a realistic, feasible schedule of activities for the project that includes appropriate management of project risks.
- Assigned key roles and responsibilities for project activities.
- Identified how research translation outputs can achieve impact.

Where and when?

The workshop will be held at the following location on the following dates:

- [insert name of venue or link to virtual meeting space]
- [insert days of week and dates of the workshop]

The workshop will begin at [insert time] and end at [insert time] each day [amend as needed if the schedule will vary if over several days]. There will be [insert number and duration of breaks].

Who?

The workshop will include:

- [Add names and titles of invited participants]

The workshop will be facilitated by

- [Add names and titles of facilitators]

How?

- **Preparatory Materials:** Participants should review the following key documents before the workshop:
  - [Insert link to document 1 and explanation as needed]
  - [Insert link to document 2 and explanation as needed]

Checklist

Check when completed	Key actions	Notes
Pre-workshop		
☐	Determine worksheets to be discussed in workshop to define scope (Guiding Questions, Research Translation Strategy, Implementation Plan, M&E plan, etc.)	
☐	Determine appropriate participants. Consider conducting a stakeholder analysis to broaden audience of workshop.	
☐	Select workshop venue	
☐	Determine timing and date(s) of workshop	
☐	Establish platform for sharing and managing documents	
☐	Review and revise the worksheet(s) based on the project's requirements	
☐	Assemble key documents that participants should review before the workshop	
☐	Share documents in advance of meeting	
☐	Print documents to take notes	
During workshop		
☐	Elect roles of timekeeper and note taker	
☐	Set ground rules at the beginning and discuss expectations	
☐	Monitor energy level in room and incorporate breaks as needed to work through challenges	
☐	Carefully observe group power dynamics and include voices that might be left out	
☐	Outline next steps and timeline	
After workshop		
☐	Share the final documents developed with the team	
☐	Review and update document at meetings as necessary	

Tool adapted from

- Catholic Relief Services. 2022. DIP Workshop: 7 steps of planning template.
- Catholic Relief Services. 2018. *Planning a Detailed Implementation Plan Workshop: a how-to guide*.
- Catholic Relief Services. n.d. *SMILER+ Workshop Planning Tool*.

Stakeholder Analysis Guidance

Why include stakeholders in research translation?

The uptake of research is slower if stakeholders lack interest, the products are irrelevant, or the findings replicate data that stakeholders already know. By ensuring stakeholder involvement and buy-in from the start of the project, the translated products are more likely to be adopted and applied by these key actors, enabling greater uptake and broader impact than researchers and their translation partners would be able to achieve on their own. A thorough stakeholder analysis will assist project teams identify key influential stakeholders through stakeholder mapping, and plan how to engage with stakeholders throughout the research project. When developing a Research Translation Strategy, it is important to determine who the stakeholders are, how to engage them, and what their research translation products needs are.

Who are stakeholders?

Stakeholders include community-based organizations, nonprofits, government entities or private-sector enterprises that should be informed, consulted, or engaged throughout the research project. They are not direct members of the project team, yet they have valuable insights to contribute to the project and have a major role in the wider application of the research findings and research translation product(s).

Project teams should carefully identify and consider the needs and perspectives of a wide range of stakeholders. This will ensure that the research translation products are applicable beyond the partners directly involved in the project and ensure that they ultimately lead to greater impact. Consider specifically targeting two to three key stakeholders throughout your project for more active involvement and in designing materials.

Tool 1: Stakeholder map

LASER PULSE encourages researchers and practitioners to collaboratively identify potential key stakeholders for their research project through stakeholder mapping (see the Stakeholder Map below). These initial discussions should take place in a formal workshop or virtual brainstorming session and should be updated as connections are made throughout the research translation process and if the project receives recommendations from other stakeholders. Note that while there may be a wide range of stakeholders that a project should consult, not all of them will have the same levels of knowledge, impact, influence, and interest in engaging with the team. The Stakeholder Map is a tool to determine the level of engagement that will be required of each stakeholder by identifying their levels of knowledge, impact, influence, and interest.

Tool 2: Stakeholder engagement plan

After completing the Stakeholder Map and identifying the relevant stakeholders for a project, LASER PULSE encourages the team to develop a plan for engaging with these key actors. The Stakeholder Engagement Plan (see example below) should be filled out in discussions between the researchers and practitioners on the team to capture when, who and how to inform, consult or engage the stakeholders identified in the above mapping activity. Note that each phase of the project will have different engagement needs—this template will outline a plan to reflect evolving needs. Each project team will have different needs and may decide on the best time to involve stakeholders.

Tool 3: Stakeholder needs assessment

When designing research translation products, it is necessary to understand the stakeholder's needs, agree upon practical changes, and plan for how those changes might occur. The co-design of research translation products between researchers and identified stakeholders is advantageous because it incorporates technical and practical knowledge. Actively engage stakeholders who can influence adoption or scale to define and co-design research translation products. Include diverse stakeholders to generate strong local ownership of the research findings. It is more influential to develop several research translation products to influence change based on the needs of the stakeholders, the purpose of the research, and the evidence collected.

Tool adapted from

- Riddering, Laura and Alexandra Towns. 2020. *"Embedded Research Translation Stakeholder Analysis."* Developed by Catholic Relief Services for the LASER PULSE Research for Development Consortium, Purdue University.

Stakeholder map worksheet

Stakeholder name	***Contact person and contact details***	***Knowledge*** Low, Medium, High	***Impact*** Low, Medium, High	***Influence*** Low, Medium, High	***Interest*** Low, Medium, High	***Engage-ment level*** informed, consulted, active

Stakeholder engagement plan worksheet

Stakeholder name	**Contact person and contact details** Include preferred communication style (email, phone, in-person meetings, etc.).	**How should these stakeholders be engaged?** List the activi-ties, messages, and engagement methods	**When will these stakeholders be engaged?** List the timeline for the activities. Remember to engage early and often.	**What are the planned outcomes or deliverables from the activity?** List how the activity will inform the project.
Stakeholders to inform				
Stakeholders to consult				
Stakeholders to actively engage				

Stakeholder needs assessment worksheet

Stakeholder name	What do they need from research translation?	What change can occur from research translation?	What format product is most appropriate to achieve change?	How will they be engaged in the development of the research translation product(s)?	Impact ranking

Guiding Questions for Proactive Research Translation

Use this workbook if you plan to collect data or are in the process of collecting data.

1. Who is defining the needs and goals of the research?

This question is posed to begin reflection and discussion about the different ways that research can be initiated and the subsequent implications on how a research project is designed and translated. We encourage research teams to consider how the call for research by different actors shapes the overall project—including its goals, research design, translation, ownership, and uptake of findings. Researchers, practitioners, or stakeholders could have different perceptions of the intent and outcomes of research translation. A lack of agreement on the intent and goal of research translation could lead to disagreement or confusion about possible desired outcomes of the translation.

To overcome these tensions, we recommend considering the alignment between who will collect the evidence and who will utilize the research. If there is alignment, research use is more likely to increase. Establishing shared decision-making early in the research process can improve the uptake of research translation.

2. Who is included in the research?

To improve the likelihood of adoption and uptake of findings, we recommend thinking through who is included in the research project from the start. It is important to identify the people or organizations that could be included in the research project to varying degrees. We divide this range of engagement into two groups: stakeholders and partners.

Stakeholders include community-based organizations, nonprofits, government entities or private-sector enterprises that should be informed, consulted, or engaged throughout the research project. They are not direct members of the research translation project team, yet they have valuable insights to contribute to the project and have a major role in the wider application of the research findings and research translation product(s). Consider conducting a *stakeholder analysis*.

Partners include any combination of researchers and community-based organizations, nonprofits, government entities or private-sector enterprises that are directly involved in decision-making throughout the research translation project. For more detailed information on partners, see the partner engagement spectrum of the Research Translation Continuum.

3. What evidence or knowledge is included in the research?

Take time to reflect on evidence production so that forethought is put into what types of data are gathered, what types of knowledge are included, and how the evidence can serve the end goal of research impact. For more in-depth understanding around evidence utilization, see the evidence-utilization spectrum of the *Research Translation Continuum* which details a variety of ways in which evidence can be produced with utilization in mind.

Many scholars assume the meaning of evidence is self-evident, even though many possibilities exist for what constitutes evidence, including the distinction between social science and physical science, and the distinction between randomized control trials and ethnographic studies. Furthermore, some scholars state that the production of evidence is influenced by values, culture, and context. Therefore, evidence and evidence production are not as straightforward as they seem. Additionally, traditional forms of knowing, such as indigenous, community-based, or folk knowledge, are often overlooked or undervalued as reliable sources of data. The discussion around the strength of evidence should not be a way to cherry pick, suppress data, or hinder the scientific process; instead, it should serve to avoid bias and unintentionally overlooking relevant data that could inform and improve the research translation process. It is important to reflect on the data, evidence and knowledge needed to make changes to policy or practice.

4. How is research translation planned?

Plan early and deliberately for research translation given the specific goals, context, time, and budgetary resources for a given project.

Implementation barriers are the most salient obstacle to effective research translation, including high time requirements, limitations and constraints of key stakeholders, and insufficient consideration of local context. Early planning can improve the uptake of research. There are multiple products that can be created from research, and multiple ways to disseminate those products for application and uptake. The production and dissemination of research translation results, however, can be costly and should be fully planned for from the start of the project. These costs could include inviting stakeholders to a workshop, engaging with government officials for wider uptake, designing print (policy briefs, evidence summaries, illustrated one-pagers, etc.), and/or media products (radio, website, television, social media, etc.). Without the appropriate allocation of time and resources, the costs of production and associated dissemination events could be overlooked, and research teams could fall short of creating the translation products and dissemination events needed to reach evidence uptake goals.

Forethought should be put into budgeting time and resources for the production and dissemination of research translation results. Including funds in the budget for professional editing and design is another way to ensure that the products are professional, attractive, and appropriate for the given audience(s).

5. How will research translation have an impact?

The intention of this question is to determine the appropriate scale, audience, research products, and dissemination channels so that the research will have an impact. Understanding the level (community, region, nation) at which research translation needs to occur is important during the planning and implementation process as users at the macrolevel are different from those at the meso- or microlevel. Furthermore, as the research project progresses and more evidence is gathered, research translation products may change. If researchers or practitioners want research impact, they must think about the dissemination of the results and the applicability of research outputs to practice or policy to the appropriate level, audience, and channels. Therefore, consideration of the influences on scale, audience, product development, and channels can shape the outcomes and impacts of the project.

For research to impact practice and policy, we recommended considering the most appropriate audience for research translation products and the most appropriate levels to translate the research from the beginning of the project. From the start of a project, this question should be discussed with relevant stakeholders to examine the different ways that research can be translated, and the potential positive and negative influences for uptake and impact. Generally speaking, projects initially begin with the goal of translating research for a specific level and audience, and disseminating it through multiple products and channels. Some projects may be able to scale up the translation to other levels.

Tool adapted from

- Riddering, Brunese, and Towns. 2021. Research Translation for International Development: a literature review, framework, and guide to developing a research translation strategy. West Lafayette, IN: LASER PULSE.

Proactive Research Translation Guiding Questions Worksheet

1. WHO IS DEFINING THE NEEDS AND GOALS OF THE RESEARCH TRANSLATION?

Consideration	Sub-questions	Answers	Action steps
Consider the **motivation** behind the actor who asks for the research and those involved.	• Who is funding the research? • Who is defining the research needs? • What is the motivation of the research?		
Consider the end **goal** of the research.	• What is the goal of the research and research translation? • Who is defining the goals of the research? • Do goals align among the research team? • Should other partners be included to define the research goal?		
Consider who has **ownership** of the research, outputs, and translation.	• How will decisions be made in the research project? • How will data and evidence be managed? Who will own it? • Who identified the problem? • Who will utilize the research? • Are partner expectations in alignment?		

2. WHO IS INCLUDED IN THE RESEARCH?

Consideration	Sub-questions	Answers	Action steps
Involvement. Consider who to involve and how to involve them.	• Who needs to be informed, consulted, or engaged in the collaboration? • When and how will the stakeholders or end users be involved from production to translation? • What are the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder or partner?		
Diversity. Consider how to find and involve different viewpoints.	• Are there other stakeholders or partners that could be included to improve research translation? • How much time is available to identify and integrate diverse voices? • How will viewpoints from different genders, races, ethnicities, etc., be respectfully integrated?		
Consider the conflicts that could occur when integrating diverse viewpoints.	• What diverse viewpoints could increase conflict during decision-making? • What processes for dialogue and reflection could be included in team meetings?		

3. WHAT EVIDENCE OR KNOWLEDGE IS INCLUDED IN THE RESEARCH?

Consideration	Sub-questions	Answers	Action steps
Consider evidence production with the end **goal** in mind.	• What is the end goal of the research translation? • What is the purpose of producing evidence? • To reach the goal, what kinds of data will need to be produced to utilize the research outputs?		
Consider what data need to be **integrated** into evidence production.	• Who understands the context in which data collection will occur? • What contextual knowledge is complementary to the technical evidence? • How will the inclusion of diverse stakeholder knowledges be incorporated into evidence production?		

4. HOW WILL RESEARCH TRANSLATION BE PLANNED?

Consideration	Sub-questions	Answers	Action steps
Consider how to find and include **contextual knowledge** to increase research translation application, uptake, and impact.	• What are the political, economic, and social factors that can shape the adoption of research into practice or policy? *(These are potential risks.)* • How will contextual factors be included in the research translation strategy? • How will the diverse and contextual knowledge be integrated into the development of research translation products?		
Consider **budgeting** time and resources for stakeholder and partner engagement.	• What are the costs of including diverse stakeholders? • What time and budgetary resources are available to support stakeholder engagement? • What processes can support planning and budgeting for engagement?		
Consider **budgeting** time and resources for product creation and dissemination events.	• What time and budgetary resources are available for product creation? • What are the actions and strategies to disseminate the research? • What time and budgetary resources are available for dissemination of research translation?		

5. HOW WILL RESEARCH TRANSLATION HAVE AN IMPACT?

Consideration	Sub-questions	Answers	Action steps
Consider the **end users** of the research translation products.	• Who is the audience for the research translation product(s)? • How will the audience use the research translation product(s)?		
Consider which **products** would be most appropriate for the audience(s) to use and adopt.	• What are the products (briefs, videos, workshops, etc.) that would be most appropriate for the audience(s) to use? • What products will be developed within the budget and time limitations?		
Consider multiple channels and events for **dissemination**.	• What channels can be used to disseminate research translation? • What virtual or in-person events can increase the uptake and impact of research translation? • Who will do the dissemination?		
Consider the actors that can shape the **adoption** of research translation.	• Which actors can influence the adoption of research into practice or policy? • How can these actors be engaged in the research translation?		
Consider how to measure or assess **impact** from research translation.	• What will change after research translation? • How will the research address the identified problem?		

Guiding Questions for Post-facto Research Translation

Use this workbook if you already have evidence and need to translate it.

1. Who defines the needs and goals of the research translation?

Consider how the initiation of the research translation by different actors, including researchers, practitioners, or donors, shapes the overall project—including its goals, ownership, and uptake of findings. Researchers, practitioners, or stakeholders could have different perceptions of the intent and outcomes of research translation. A lack of agreement on the intent and goal of research translation could lead to disagreement or confusion about possible desired outcomes.

To overcome these tensions, consider the alignment between how existing evidence will be selected and who will utilize the research. If there is alignment, research translation product utilization is more likely to increase. Establishing shared decision-making early in the research translation process can improve the uptake of research translation.

2. Who will be included in the research translation?

Think through who is included in the research translation project from the start, to improve the likelihood of adaptation and uptake of findings. It is important to identify the people or organizations that could be included in the research translation project. We divide this range of engagement into two groups: stakeholders and partners.

Stakeholders include community-based organizations, nonprofits, government entities or private-sector enterprises that should be informed, consulted, or engaged throughout the research project. They are not direct members of the project team, but they have valuable insights to contribute to the project and have a major role in the wider application of the research findings and research translation product(s).

Partners include any combination of researchers and community-based organizations, nonprofits, government entities or private-sector enterprises that are directly involved in decision-making throughout the research translation project. The partner engagement spectrum of the Research Translation Continuum details ways practitioners and researchers can engage.

3. What evidence or knowledge will be included in the research translation?

Reflect on evidence use so that forethought is put into what types of evidence and knowledge are included in the translation and how that evidence can serve the end goal of research utilization and impact. The evidence-utilization spectrum of the *Research Translation Continuum* details a variety of ways in which evidence can be produced with utilization in mind.

Many scholars assume the meaning of evidence is self-evident even though many possibilities exist for what constitutes evidence—including the distinction between social science and physical science and the distinction between randomized control trials and ethnographic studies. Furthermore, some scholars state that the production of evidence is influenced by values, culture, and context. Therefore, evidence and evidence production are not as straightforward as they seem. Additionally, traditional forms of knowing, such as indigenous, community-based, or folk knowledge, are often overlooked or undervalued as reliable sources of data. The discussion around evidence should not be a way to cherry pick or suppress evidence or hinder the scientific process; instead, it should serve to avoid bias and unintentionally overlooking relevant evidence that could inform and improve the research translation. It is important to reflect on the evidence and knowledge needed to make changes to policy or practice.

4. How is research translation planned?

Plan deliberately for research translation given the specific goals, context, time, and budgetary resources for a given project.

Implementation barriers—including high time requirements, limitations and constraints of key stakeholders and insufficient consideration of local context—are the most salient obstacles to effective research translation. There are multiple products that can be created from research, and multiple ways to disseminate those products for application and uptake. The production and dissemination of research translation results, however, can be costly and should be fully planned for from the start of the project. These costs could include inviting stakeholders to a workshop, engaging with government officials for wider uptake and designing print (policy briefs, evidence summaries, illustrated one-pagers, etc.), and/or media products (radio, website, television, social media, etc.). Without the appropriate time and resources allocated, the costs of production and the associated dissemination events could be overlooked. This could cause research teams to fall short of creating the translation products and dissemination events needed to reach evidence uptake goals.

Forethought should be put into budgeting time and resources for the production and dissemination of research translation results. Including funds in the budget for professional editing and design is another way to ensure that the products are professional, attractive, and appropriate for the given audience(s).

5. How will research translation have impact?

Determine the appropriate scale, audience, research products, and dissemination channels so that the research translation will have an impact. Understanding the level (community, region, nation) at which research translation needs to occur is important during the planning and implementation process as users at the macrolevel are different from those at the mesolevel or microlevel. Furthermore, as the research project progresses and more evidence is gathered, research translation products may change. If researchers or practitioners want research impact, they must think about the dissemination of the results and the applicability of research outputs to practice or policy to the appropriate level, audience, and channels. Therefore, consideration of the influences on scale, audience, product development, and channels can shape the outcomes and impacts of the project.

For research to impact practice and policy, we recommend considering the most appropriate audience for research translation products and the most appropriate levels to translate the research from the beginning of the project. From the start of a project, this question should be discussed with relevant stakeholders to examine the different ways that research can be translated and the potential positive and negative influences for uptake and impact. Generally speaking, projects initially begin with the goal of translating research for a specific level and audience and disseminating it through multiple products and channels. Some projects may be able to scale up the translation to other levels.

Tool adapted from

- Riddering, Brunese, and Towns. 2021. Research Translation for International Development: a literature review, framework, and guide to developing a research translation strategy. West Lafayette, IN: LASER PULSE.

Post-facto Research Translation Guiding Questions Worksheet

1. WHO DEFINES THE NEEDS AND GOALS OF THE RESEARCH TRANSLATION?

Consideration	Sub-questions	Answers	Action steps
Consider the **motivation** behind the actor who asks for the research and those involved.	• Who asked for research to be translated? • Who is funding the research translation? • What is the motivation for research translation?		
Consider the end **goal** of the research and research translation.	• What was the goal of the research? • What is the goal of the research translation? • Do goals align among the research team? • Should other partners be included to define the research translation goals(s)?		
Consider who has **ownership** of the research, outputs, and translation.	• How will decisions be made in the research translation project? • How will data and evidence be managed? Who will own it? • Who will utilize the research translation? • Are partner expectations aligned?		

2. WHO WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE RESEARCH TRANSLATION?

Consideration	Sub-questions	Answers	Action steps
Involvement. Consider who will be involved.	• When and how will stakeholders, partners, or end users be involved in the research translation? • What are the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder or partner?		
Diversity. Consider the involvement of different viewpoints.	• Are there other stakeholders or partners that could be included to improve research translation? • How much time is available to identify and integrate diverse voices? • How will viewpoints from different genders, races, ethnicities, etc., be respectfully integrated?		
Conflict. Consider the conflict that could occur when integrating diverse viewpoints.	• What diverse viewpoints could increase conflict in decision-making? • What processes for dialogue and reflection could be included in team meetings?		

3. WHAT EVIDENCE OR KNOWLEDGE WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE RESEARCH TRANSLATION?

Consideration	Sub-questions	Answers	Action steps
Consider evidence production with the end **goal** in mind.	• What is the purpose of harnessing this evidence for translation? • To reach the goal, does the collected evidence address the goal of research translation?		
Consider what knowledges and evidence need to be **integrated** into translation products.	• Who understands the context in which translation will occur? • What contextual knowledge is complementary to the technical evidence? • How will the inclusion of diverse stakeholder knowledges be incorporated into creation of translation products?		

4. HOW WILL RESEARCH TRANSLATION BE PLANNED?

Consideration	Sub-questions	Answers	Action steps
Consider how to find and include **contextual knowledge** to increase research translation application, uptake, and impact.	• What are the political, economic, and social factors that can shape the adoption of research into practice or policy? • How will contextual factors be included in the research translation strategy? • How will the diverse and contextual knowledge be integrated into the development of research translation products?		
Consider **budgeting** time and resources for stakeholder and partner engagement.	• What are the costs of including diverse stakeholders? • What time and budgetary resources are available to support stakeholder engagement? • What processes can support planning and budgeting for engagement?		
Consider **budgeting** time and resources for product creation and dissemination events.	• What time and budgetary resources are available for product creation? • What are the actions and strategies to disseminate the research? • What time and budgetary resources are available for dissemination of research translation?		

5. HOW WILL RESEARCH TRANSLATION HAVE AN IMPACT?

Consideration	Sub-questions	Answers	Action steps
Consider the end **users** of the research translation products.	• Who is the audience for the research translation product(s)? • How will the audience use the research translation product(s)?		
Consider which **products** would be most appropriate for the audience(s) to use and adopt.	• What are the products (briefs, videos, workshops, etc.) that would be most appropriate for the audience(s) to use? • What products will be developed within the budget and time limitations?		
Consider multiple channels and events for **dissemination**.	• What channels can be used to disseminate research translation? • What virtual or in-person events can increase the uptake and impact of research translation? • Who will do the dissemination?		
Consider the actors that can shape the **adoption** of research translation.	• Which actors can influence the adoption of research into practice or policy? • How can these actors be engaged in the research translation?		
Consider how to measure or assess **impact** from research translation.	• What will change after research translation? • How will the research address the identified problem?		

Research Translation Strategy Worksheet

	Question to ask	Guiding Question (GQ)	Answer for project
Challenge	*What is the development challenge you are trying to solve?*	*GQ 1 motivation and goal*	
Audience	*Who is most affected by the challenge? Who will use research?*	*GQ 1 ownership & GQ 5 end users*	
Goal	*What change do you want to see from research translation?*	*GQ 3, goal*	
Outputs	*What research translation products will achieve this change?*	*GQ 5 products*	

3. Outputs *The activities, services, events, and products to achieve goal* *From GQ 5 products and dissemination*		**1. Outcomes** *Results or changes related to the research findings, translation, and dissemination* *From GQ 5 impact*			**2. Indicators** *The measurement progress of changes to reach goals* *From GQ 5 impact*	
Activities	**Audience(s)** *GQ 5 end users*	**Short-term outcomes**	**Mid-term outcomes**	**Long-term outcomes**	**Process indicator**	**Outcome indicator**

Potential risks What contextual factors could hinder research uptake and impact? *GQ 4, contextual knowledge; GQ 5, adoption*	**Action steps** Tangible steps to address or mitigate the risks	**Responsible** Who will lead this action? *GQ 2 involvement*	**Resources** What financial and labor inputs are needed? *GQ 4 budgeting*

Tool adapted from

- CRS. 2015. *ProPack I*: The CRS Project Package; Project Design Guidance for CRS Project and Program Managers. Baltimore: Catholic Relief Services.
- Compass. n.d. *How to Develop a Logic Model*. In SBCC How to Guides. Baltimore, MD: Breakthrough-ACTION.
- Compass. n.d. *How to Develop Indicators*. In SBCC How to Guides. Baltimore, MD: Breakthrough-ACTION.
- CRS. 2008. *Consortium Alignment Framework for Excellence* (CAFE). Baltimore, MD: Catholic Relief Services.
- Knowlton, Lisa Wyatt, and Cynthia C. Phillips. 2013. "*Creating Program Logic Models.*" In The Logic Model Guidebook: Better Strategies for Great Results, 35–48. Sage Publications.

Research Translation Implementation Plan Worksheet

The tangible steps required beyond the research methods needed to achieve research impact and address the development challenge. Draw from action steps identified from the Guiding Questions (GQ) and the research translation strategy.

Activity	Responsible *GQ 2 involvement*	Budget *GQ 4 budgeting*	Year 1												Year 2												Indicator
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	

Tool adapted from

- CRS. 2018. *Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP) Template*. Baltimore, MD: Catholic Relief Services.

Research Translation Monitoring and Evaluation Plan Worksheet

Indicator	Data source(s)	Frequency of data collection	Target	Baseline at start of project	Midpoint	Endpoint	% of target achieved at end of project

Tool adapted from

- Compass. n.d. *How to Develop a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan*. In SBCC How to Guides. Baltimore, MD: Breakthrough-ACTION.
- CRS. 2020. *Monitoring for Problem-solving, Adaptive Management, Reporting and Learning*. Baltimore, MD. Catholic Relief Services.
- CRS. n.d. Indicator Performance Tracking Table (IPTT) Template. Baltimore, MD. Catholic Relief Services.