

# **Impact of Evidence Use in Decision Making: A case for Malawi**

**By:**  
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# Outline

- Background
- Methodology
- Results
- Conclusions

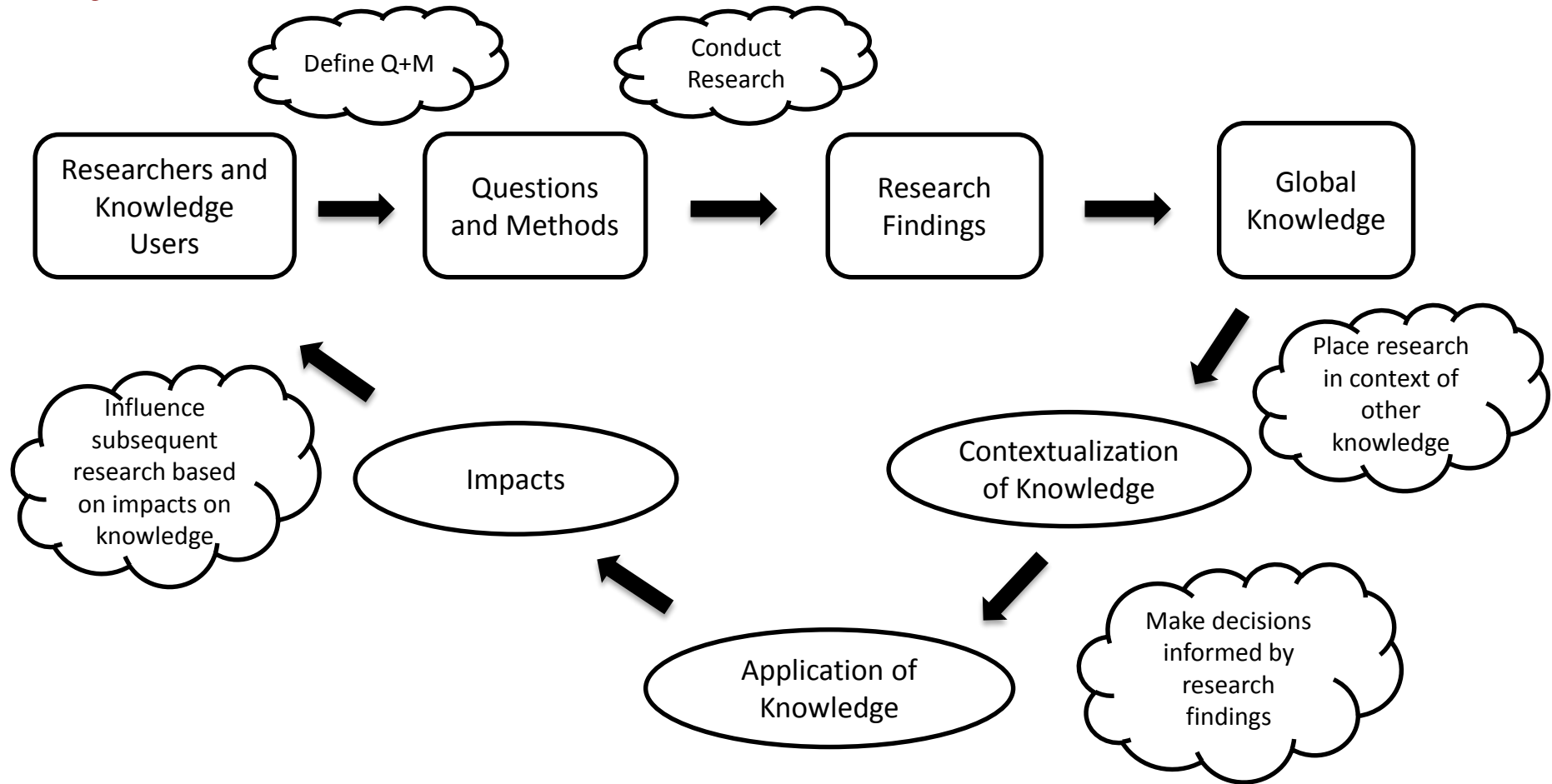
# Malawi's Knowledge Translation Platform (KTPMalawi)

Definition of Knowledge Translation:

- A dynamic and iterative process that includes synthesis, dissemination, exchange and ethically-sound application of knowledge to improve the health of Malawians, provide more effective health services and products and strengthen the health care system.

(Adapted from the Canadian Institute for Health Research)

# The Knowledge Translation Cycle



# KTPMalawi Objectives

- To engage national-level policymakers, researchers, implementers and civil society members in a coordinated approach to the generation and utilization of health-sector research in Malawi in support of evidence-informed health policy and practice

## **Sub objectives**

- To establish the institutional infrastructure to foster and sustain KTPMalawi
- To improve the accessibility and quality of the dialogue on research relevant to high-priority policy issues
- To strengthen regional and international partnerships under WHO-EVIPNet to improve the dissemination and implementation of regionally adapted KT best practices

# KTP Malawi

- Established in late 2012
- Evidence Informed Policy Network (EVIPNet) a WHO initiative
- KTPMalawi a member of EVIPNet Africa
- Secretariat within Ministry of Health – Research Unit in collaboration with Dignitas International
- Baseline survey was conducted amongst the Steering Committee (SC)
- Training of middle level managers from MoH and Parliament

# Methodology: Initial Activities

- Political Context Analysis

- Showed two gaps between policymakers and research :

Finding	Action Taken
A want for policymakers to engage more in the development of research questions and methods	Development of National Health Research Agenda
Research uptake to improve national policy and practice not optimized	Development of KTPMalawi

- Knowledge Translation Capacity Building Workshops for Policymakers and Researchers
- Formed KTPMalawi Steering Committee
- KTPMalawi invited to sit on AFRO and Global WHO Knowledge Translation Steering Committees
- KTP Malawi formally endorsed by the Ministry of Health Senior Management Team

# KTP Malawi Structure

- Steering Committee (National health leaders – researchers, academician, civil society and policymakers) prioritized initial Communities of Practices
  - HIV-NCD Integration
  - Pharmaceutical Supply Chain Management
- Communities of Practice focused content scope for development of evidence briefs for policy
  - Improving the screening and treatment of hypertension in people living with HI





# Activities...

Additional Community of Practices:

- Contraceptive Use among the young population
- Health and Climate Change
- PMTCT
- Malaria

# Activities

- Conducted 4 Science Cafés:
  - ❖ How can research evidence be used to enhance the efficiency of public health service: The case of free health services vs. paying services in Malawian public hospitals
  - ❖ Usage of contraceptives among young people: Issues of access, abortions, maternal and child mortality
  - ❖ Capacity of the Malawi Health System to respond to outbreak: The case of Ebola
  - ❖ Improving the use of evidence in health policymaking


# Results: Impact of Evidence

- Baseline data showed that 75% respondents reported that evidence briefs were rarely available to policymakers
  - Development of Policy Briefs
- Changes in guidelines for malaria treatment, voluntary male medical circumcision and family planning
- Advocacy for financing health research
- Engagement of a dialogue on Education Policy on Health

# NCD-HIV Integration Community of Practice Progress

- Multi-disciplinary author team developed evidence brief for policy
- Full brief and executive summary available at [KTPMalawi.org](http://KTPMalawi.org)
- Brief detailed the problem, four potential policy options and implementation considerations – Summarized local and global evidence

The image shows the cover of a policy brief. At the top center is the coat of arms of Malawi with the text 'Ministry of Health' below it. The title 'An Evidence-Based Policy Brief' is in a smaller font, followed by the main title 'Improving the Screening and Treatment of Hypertension in People Living with HIV' in a large, bold font. Below the title, there are three sections: 'Full Evidence Brief For Policy' with a list of included and not included items, 'Who is this policy brief for?' and 'Why was this policy brief prepared?' on the right side, and 'What is an evidence-based policy brief?' at the bottom right. The bottom of the cover features logos for USAID, Grand Challenges Canada, NCSF, KTP Malawi, DIGNITAS, IDRC, CRDI, Partners In Health, UNC Project Lilongwe, Malawi, EVIPNet, MEIRU, and HRC SI.

  
Ministry of Health

**An Evidence-Based Policy Brief**

## Improving the Screening and Treatment of Hypertension in People Living with HIV

**Full Evidence Brief For Policy**

**+ Included:**

- *Description of a health system problem*
- *Viable options for addressing this problem*
- *Strategies for implementing these options*

**✗ Not included: recommendations**  
*This policy brief does not make recommendations regarding which policy option to choose*


**Who is this policy brief for?**  
Policymakers, their support staff, and other stakeholders with an interest in the problem addressed by this policy brief


**Why was this policy brief prepared?**  
To inform deliberations about health policies and programmes by summarising the best available evidence about the problem and viable solutions


**What is an evidence-based policy brief?**  
Evidence-based policy briefs bring together global research evidence (from systematic reviews\* where possible) and local evidence to inform deliberations about health policies and programmes


\*Systematic review: A summary of studies addressing a clearly formulated question that uses systematic and explicit methods to identify, select, and critically appraise the relevant research, and to collect and analyse data from this research


**Executive Summary**  
The evidence presented in this full evidence brief for policy is summarized in an Executive Summary


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 Project supported by:  
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 **KTP**  
MALAWI  
Knowledge Translation Partners


 **DIGNITAS**


 **IDRC**


 **CRDI**

 **Partners In Health**

 **UNC PROJECT**  
Lilongwe, Malawi

 **EVIPNet**

 **MEIRU**  
Malawi Epidemiology and Intervention Research Unit

 **HRC SI**  
Health Research Capacity Strengthening Initiative

# NCD-HIV Integration Community of Practice Progress

- Convened national policy dialogue utilizing HTN-HIV evidence brief in November 2015
  - Two main outcomes:
    1. Global and local evidence was not strong enough to recommend one of the four policy options
    2. Four policy options now being piloted within Malawi:
      1. Partners in Health
      2. Dignitas International
      3. Lighthouse Trust and
      4. DREAM
- KTPMalawi coordinating evaluations across NCD-HIV programs so that high quality local evidence can be injected into ongoing policy discussions

# Impact of Evidence

- Development of Guidelines on EIPM
- Increase political will to use evidence

## APM for evidence-based policy making, planning

▲ Suzgo Khunga © April 19, 2016

President Peter Mutharika has asked Cabinet secretaries in Africa to employ evidence-based decision-making to avoid coming up with theoretical and unpractical policies that are left to gather dust on office bookshelves. Mutharika said this on Monday at the opening of the five-day Third Roundtable Workshop of the African Cabinet Secretaries which has brought together 12 members of the African Cabinet Government Network (ACGN).

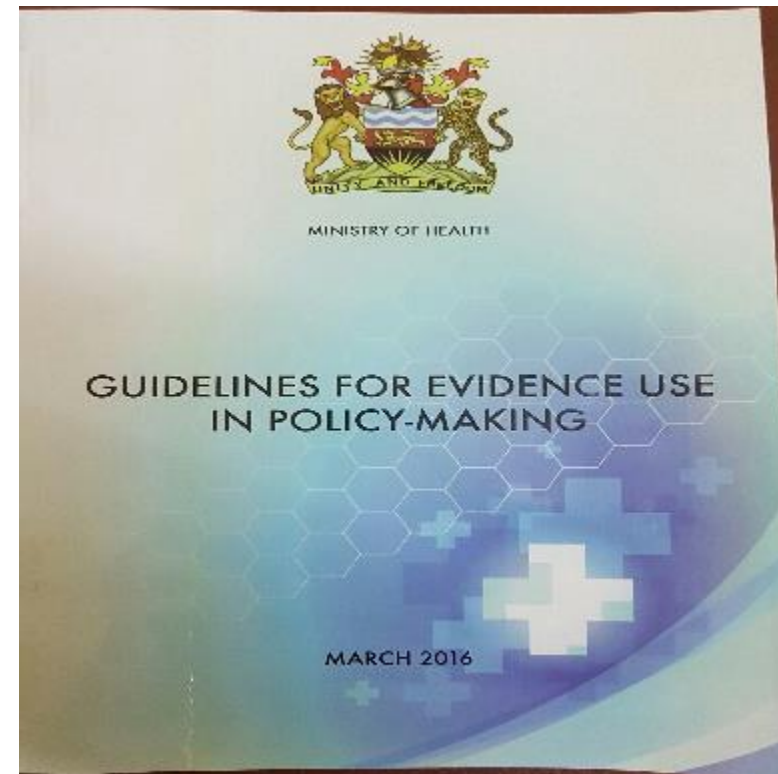
Malawi is hosting the workshop at a time when government is implementing the Public Service Reforms Programme.

In his remarks, the President said in their roles as Cabinet secretaries or Chief Secretary as is the case in Malawi, the officers have a duty to ensure that Cabinet decision-making is effective and efficient.



Mutharika wishes Surrur fruitful deliberationsfor

Hesaid: "It is your duty to ensure that appropriate procedures are developed to guide the policy-making process. If Africa is to move forward, we cannot tolerate haphazard policy development. We cannot accept policies that do not listen to the people, to the procedures, and to evidence." Mutharika touted two Malawi projects, Public Policy Research and Analysis Project and a policy manual called



# Conclusion

- KTP act as a coordinating body in synthesizing evidence and generating policy engagement.
- Evidence briefs and policy dialogues is building a critical mass of high-level KT capacity
- Evaluations from stakeholders indicate a strong appetite for this structure, function and activities

# Acknowledgments



DIGNITAS

## Funders:





**THANK YOU**