

Module 4: Synthesizing Evidence

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Module Objectives

At the end of this module participants will be able to:

- Know key characteristics for assessing 'usability' of evidence
- Define evidence synthesis and describe steps in synthesizing
- Describe what makes policy recommendations 'actionable'
- Know functions and key elements of a policy brief
- Demonstrate evidence synthesis and draft a policy brief on their issue
- Use the 'elevator pitch' strategy to effectively deliver key messages about their policy issue
- Identify tips for effective presentations

The text and table below summarize key factors to consider when assessing applicability and transferability of an intervention. A series of questions are outlined which you can use to weigh the usability.

A second set of questions is included after assessment of applicability and transferability to help you to determine if the evidence calls for action.

Assessing Usability of Research Evidence

There are two major considerations to address when determining how to use specific evidence within a particular institution or geography: *Applicability* and *Transferability*.

Applicability refers to the feasibility of an innovation in a particular setting. In other words, is it possible to implement it in your country or organization? Another word for this is feasibility.

Transferability refers to the generalizability of an innovation. In other words, is the innovation relevant to your context, and is it likely to generate the same type of impact in your setting as it did where it was tested? Other words for this are generalizability and replicability.

Assessment of Applicability & Transferability

Construct	Factors	Questions to Ask
Applicability (feasibility)	Political acceptability or leverage	Will the intervention be allowed or supported in current political climate? Will there be public relations benefit for local government? Will this program enhance the stature of the organization? Will the public and target groups accept and support the intervention in its current format?
	Social acceptability	Will the target population be interested in the intervention? Is it ethical?
	Available essential resources (personnel and financial)	Who/what is available/essential for the local implementation? Are they adequately trained? If not, is training available and affordable? What is needed to tailor the intervention locally? What are the full costs (supplies, systems, space requirements for staff, training, technology/administrative supports) per unit of expected outcome? Are the incremental health benefits worth the costs of the intervention?
	Organizational expertise and capacity	Is the current strategic plan/operational plan in alignment with the intervention to be offered? Does this intervention fit with its mission and local priorities? Does it conform to existing legislation or regulations (either local or provincial?) Does it overlap with existing programs or is it symbiotic? Any organizational barriers/structural issues or approval processes to be addressed? Is the organization motivated (learning organization)?
Transferability (generalizability)	Magnitude of health issue in local setting	Does the need exist? What is the baseline prevalence of the health issue locally? What is the difference in prevalence of the health issue (risk status) between study and local settings?
	Magnitude of the “reach” and cost effectiveness of the intervention above	Will the intervention broadly “cover” the target population?
	Target population characteristics	Are they comparable to the study population? Will any difference in characteristics (ethnicity, socio-demographic variables, number of persons affected) impact intervention effectiveness locally?

Source: Ciliska, D. (2007). Tool for Assessing Applicability and Transferability of Evidence. Accessed at: http://www.nccmt.ca/pubs/A&T_Tool_-_FINAL_English_Oct_07.pdf

Illustrative decision points to address after assessment of both applicability and transferability include:

- Does the innovation “fit”?
- Does it seem relevant for your current public health ‘problem’ or policy objective?
- Would it be suitable to your population?
- Would the innovation be acceptable to the Ministry of Health?
- Should we do it here?
- What are the potential benefits?
- What are the potential costs?
- What are the risks?

- Can we do it here?
- Is it possible to implement the innovation with the resources we have?
- If not, could any resources be reallocated or mobilized for this purpose?
- Do we have the necessary core inputs needed for implementation?
- How will we do it here?
- Do we have local partners who would engage in this initiative?
- Should we try the innovation on a small scale first?
- How will we measure the impact or success of the innovation?
- Would you recommend going on to the implementation planning stage?

Source: National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools (2012). What is Evidence-Informed Public Health? <http://www.nccmt.ca/learningcentre/index.php?lang=en#main2.html>

Synthesizing Evidence

Below are steps and tips for synthesizing evidence, including a description of the difference between summarizing and synthesizing. These suggestions will be helpful as you work to generate your own evidence syntheses, policy recommendations, policy briefs, and other policy messages.

Why synthesize?

Consider real-life, practical reasons why we might need to do synthesize evidence and what deliverables can be generated. Reasons may include: to understand the information, to present the information to others, create a policy brief.

The most successful briefs and papers are those that use many sources to support an original thesis. This requires more than simply summarizing passages of source material; it means drawing connections between the sources, and using these connections to relate the different passages in a way that sheds new light on, and transforms, the material.

Source: Sullivan, J. (2011). Strategies for Synthesis Writing. <http://www.findingdulcinea.com/features/edu/Strategies-for-Synthesis-Writing.html>

Analyzing evidence on policy options for tackling the policy issue

Critical analysis of the evidence on the potential policy options for tackling the policy issue is an important step in the synthesis process. Basically, if one is going to propose policy solutions/options for tackling the problem, one needs to have a good understanding of the current options being implemented and why they are not working, and strong evidence on other policy options, explaining clearly why these are likely to work compared to the current options. This critical review should be well laid out by the way one discusses the evidence on the different potential policy options. This analysis is critical as it is the one that informs the policy recommendations that one makes.

Tips for how-to synthesize evidence

Identify - Identify the role of a synthesis in your writing as well as the kind of information readers will need.

Read - Gather and read your sources, preparing a summary of each. Find the important ideas in all pieces of evidence.

Focus - Decide on the purpose of your synthesis, and draft a summary of your conclusions about how the sources relate. Summarize before you synthesize.

Think about what you know about these important ideas. Can you add something the authors have not mentioned? What are your own ideas about the information? What observations can you make about this information?

Arrange - Select a sequence for the sources in your synthesis. Think about how you can rearrange or reorganize the information in a new way.

Write - Draft your synthesis, combining your summaries of the sources with your conclusions about their relationships. Combine them in one summary.

Visualize - Diagrams are especially helpful tools for synthesizing data. By visually representing relationships you are seeing, you can communicate many concepts on one page.

Revise - Rewrite so that your synthesis is easy to read and readers can easily identify the sources of the various ideas.

Document - Indicate clearly the sources for your synthesis using a standard style of documentation.

Source: Southwestern Illinois College (no date). Success Center Tips for Summarizing, Paraphrasing, and Synthesizing. <http://www.swic.edu/sw-content.aspx?id=14306>

Summarizing versus synthesizing

Summarizing and synthesizing are both strategies and important skills for making sense of what one is reading. Summarizing and synthesizing are different activities. Each has a different purpose, process and end result. This chart highlights some of the main differences between summarizing and synthesizing information.

Summary	Synthesis
Basic reading technique.	Advanced reading technique.
Pulls together information in order to highlight the important points.	You pull together information not only to highlight the important points, but also to draw your own conclusions.
Re-iterates the information.	Combines and contrasts information from different sources.
Shows what the original authors wrote.	Not only reflects your knowledge about what the original authors wrote, but also creates something new out of two or more pieces of writing.
Addresses one set of information (e.g. article, chapter, and document) at a time. Each source remains distinct.	Combines parts and elements from a variety of sources into one unified entity.
Presents a cursory overview.	Focuses on both main ideas and details.
Demonstrates an understanding of the overall meaning.	Achieves new insight.

Source: Eaton, S. (2010). Reading strategies: Differences between summarizing and synthesizing. <https://drsaraheaton.wordpress.com/2010/09/29/reading-strategies-differences-between-summarizing-and-synthesizing/>

Tips for writing compelling and concise syntheses

- Message is Evidence-based - Complement quantitative and qualitative evidence
 - Facts
 - Stories
- Simplify complex evidence and present it in a compelling manner
- Keep it Short
 - Focus on the clearly defining your policy problem
 - Clearly present at least three main findings
 - Clearly present a few conclusions/implications and recommendations to address the problem based on the findings

Keep it Simple

Unpack complex issues into simple messages

58% of Kenyans cannot afford maize flour	OR	Nearly 6 in ten Kenyans cannot afford maize flour
There exist a positive correlation between the level of education and the number of times a woman attends antenatal care clinics, the correlation is especially significant for women who have attained secondary school education and above	OR	Education helps improve the health of mothers; women with secondary school education or higher are more like to seek care during pregnancy than women with lower levels of education

The information that follows comes from the *Writing Center at University of North Carolina* and is provided to aid in the understanding of how you can present evidence.

The *Writing Center* offers handouts and YouTube videos on nearly 100 writing topics ranging from “making an argument” to “conciseness” and writing “scientific research reports” (check it out here: <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/>)

Tips for presenting evidence

There are several ways to present evidence from multiple sources. Besides synthesis as text in the body of your paper, you can also use as a quotes or paraphrase. Sometimes you might include graphs, charts, or tables; excerpts from an interview; or photographs or illustrations with accompanying captions.

When to quote

When you quote, you are reproducing another writer's words exactly as they appear on the page. Here are some tips to help you decide when to use quotations:

- Quote if you can't say it any better and the author's words are particularly brilliant, witty, edgy, distinctive, a good illustration of a point you're making, or otherwise interesting.
- Quote if you are using a particularly authoritative source and you need the author's expertise to back up your point.
- Quote if you are analyzing diction, tone, or a writer's use of a specific word or phrase.
- Quote if you are taking a position that relies on the reader understanding exactly what another writer says about the topic.

When to paraphrase

When you paraphrase, you take a specific section of a text and put it into your own words. Putting it into your own words does not mean just changing or rearranging a few of the author's words: to paraphrase well and avoid plagiarism, try setting your source aside and restating the sentence or paragraph you have just read, as though you were describing it to another person. Paraphrasing is different from summary because a paraphrase focuses on a particular, fairly short bit of text (like a phrase, sentence, or paragraph). You'll need to indicate when you are paraphrasing someone else's text by citing your source correctly, just as you would with a quotation.

When might you want to paraphrase?

- Paraphrase when you want to introduce a writer's position, but his or her original words aren't special enough to quote.
- Paraphrase when you are supporting a particular point and need to draw on a certain place in a text that supports your point—for example, when one paragraph in a source is especially relevant.
- Paraphrase when you want to present a writer's view on a topic that differs from your position or that of another writer; you can then refute writer's specific points in your own words after you paraphrase.
- Paraphrase when you want to comment on a particular example that another writer uses.
- Paraphrase when you need to present information that's unlikely to be questioned.

Source: The Writing Center at UNC Chapel Hill (2014). Evidence. <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/evidence/>

Writing Actionable Recommendations

The list of action verbs below may be helpful in honing the language of a policy recommendation or set of actions you want to be taken by a decision-maker, governing body, or organization. There are many more verbs, but this list may help you get started. Consider and look for the action verbs used in your field, organization, sphere of influence.

The impact of your policy recommendations partly depends on how well the issue and the arguments justifying the recommended course of action are presented. In addition to keeping your recommendations short/concise and simple, they need to have high level of **accuracy**.

You may need to review findings from elsewhere and systematic reviews, before making recommendations for policy change.

If you are suggesting change, ask yourself:

- What specifically needs to be changed?
- How will this change come about?
- What resources will be needed? Where will these resources come from?
- What is the overall benefit to the policymaker and to society?

The word 'actionable' suggests that your recommendations should be active. Use active language - words like use, engage, incorporate (see more examples in the table below).

Action Verbs

Analyze	Appraise	Assemble	Assist
Authorize	Calculate	Collect	Compile
Conduct	Consult	Coordinate	Correspond
Delegate	Design	Determine	Develop
Direct	Discuss	Distribute	Draft
Establish	Estimate	Evaluate	Execute
Exercise	Formulate	Implement	Improve
Initiate	Inspect	Instruct	Investigate
Monitor	Notify	Obtain	Participate
Perform	Plan	Practice	Prepare
Provide	Recommend	Report	Represent
Research	Review	Schedule	Select
Specify	Submit	Supervise	Train
Verify			

Writing Policy Briefs

Below are useful summaries of components of effective *policy briefs* as well as questions to help get you started with writing your policy brief.

Read the Handout on *SUPPORT tool: 'Preparing and using policy briefs to support evidence-informed policymaking'*. This tool provides questions to ask when developing a policy brief as well as an outline to follow and several examples of completed briefs.

What policymakers want from policy briefs:

- A short, visually appealing document that is concise, quick to read and easy to understand.
- Content that is immediately useful and relevant to operational work.
- A visual or diagram mapping the evidence. These can take many forms, but the most helpful diagrams summarize the evidence for and against particular interventions, and indicate the quality of this evidence.
- A clear, accessible key messages section.
- References – with hyperlinks where possible – to allow readers to follow up information and access sources of evidence.
- Details about the evidence context – which countries and regions do particular findings relate to?"

Source: UKAID (2013). Research Uptake Guidance: A guide for DFID-funded research programmes.
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/200088/Research_uptake_guidance.pdf

The 5Cs of Effective Research Briefs



The 5Cs on effective research briefs include:

- 1) Clear
- 2) Compelling
- 3) Credible
- 4) Coherent
- 5) Concise

Sources: <https://pixabay.com/en/dialog-tip-advice-hint-speaking-148815/>; Mind Tools, Ltd. (2016). The 7 Cs of Communication.
http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newCS_85.htm

Video on 'Art and Craft of Policy Briefs'

The Women's and Children's Health Policy Center (WCHPC) at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health has developed a video that we found useful in highlighting key points to bear in mind as you write your policy brief. Watch the video, the 'Art and Craft of Policy Briefs: Translating science and engaging stakeholders' at: http://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/womens-and-childrens-health-policy-center/de/policy_brief/video

Beginning your Policy Brief

Use these questions to begin thinking about your policy brief's purpose, audience, and contribution:

- What problem will your brief address?
- Who is the audience? Why is the problem important to them? What do you know about the audience (e.g., technical knowledge, political or organizational culture or constraints, exposure to the issue, potential openness to the message)?
- What other policy or issue briefs already exist? How will your brief differ (e.g., different information, perspective, aim, or audience)?

Outlining Policy Brief Content:

Use these questions to lay out the framework and basic content of your policy brief.

- What is the aim of the policy brief? Write one or two sentences from which the rest of the brief will follow.
- What is the best hook for the audience?
- What background information does the audience need?
- What data are most important to include for your audience?
- How will you present the data so it best conveys its message (e.g., in text, bar graph, line graph)?
- What are the policy options based on the evidence that you have reviewed (if appropriate to your topic/aim)?

Structure of policy briefs

Title of policy brief	<p>Focus on the issue; make title memorable by choosing a provocative or surprising title, so that it sticks in the reader's mind</p> <p>It is often best to communicate your key message and the need for change in the title</p>
Key messages	<p>The <i>Key Messages</i> aims to convince the reader further that the brief is worth reading</p> <p>It is especially important for an audience that is short of time to clearly see the relevance and importance of the brief in reading the <i>Key Messages</i>. Keep the <i>Key Messages</i> brief, stating 3-5 messages is ideal</p>
Introduction (context and importance of problem)	<p>The purpose of this element of the brief is to convince the target audience that a current and urgent problem exists which requires them to take action. The context and importance of the problem is both the introductory and first building block of the brief. As such, it usually includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear statement of the problem or issue in focus. What is the problem? What is the magnitude of the problem? Who is affected by the problem? Why is the problem important? • A short overview of the root causes of the problem • A clear statement of the policy implications of the problem that clearly establishes the current importance and policy relevance of the issue
Critique of the policy options – present the options and discuss their impact (based on evidence)	<p>This is the main part of your brief and it should provide a critical analysis of the potential policy options for tackling the issue – this is an evidence-driven section. It should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight the shortcomings of the current policy • Illustrate both the need to change and focus of where change needs to occur • Provide an overview of the potential policy options for tackling the issue and discuss their justification of why these options can address the issue
Recommendations	<p>Based on the evidence in the preceding section, propose 3-5 specific and feasible recommendations required to address the most pressing issues outlined at the beginning of your policy brief</p> <p>Your recommendation should make it clear in detail what policy-makers have to do to adopt your recommendations and why it is in their best interest to do so</p>
Reference list	<p>At the end of the brief, include a list of references to the materials that you cited in the main text</p>

Sources: Global Debate & Public Policy Challenge (no date). Writing Guidelines: Policy Brief. <http://gdppc.idebate.org/content/writing-guidelines-policy-brief>; CBMS Network Coordinating Team (no date) Guidelines for Writing a Policy Brief. https://www.pep-net.org/sites/pep-net.org/files/typo3doc/pdf/CBMS_country_proj_profiles/Philippines/CBMS_forms/Guidelines_for_Writing_a_Policy_Brief.pdf

In addition, a policy brief may contain the following:

- Boxes and sidebars
- Tables
- Graphics
- Photographs

The length of a policy brief depends either on who the audience is or the type of briefing or both. For instance, a memo, which is a type of a briefing that is commonly used in government ministries and agencies, is often just one page. Generally, policy briefs should not be more than four pages.

Benchmark for a policy brief

To guarantee the quality and effectiveness of a policy brief, one needs to ensure that the brief has critical ingredients outlined in the table below.

Key ingredients of a policy brief

Evidence	Persuasive argument	Clear purpose Cohesive argument Quality of evidence Transparency of evidence underpinning policy recommendations (e.g. a single study, a synthesis of available evidence, etc.)
	Authority	Messenger (individual or organization) has credibility in eyes of policy-maker
Policy context	Audience context specificity	Addresses specific context > national and sub-national Addresses needs of target audience > social vs economic policy
	Actionable recommendations	Information linked to specific policy processes Clear and feasible recommendations on policy steps to be taken
Engagement	Presentation of evidence-informed opinions	Presentation of author's own views about policy implications of research findings But clear identification of argument components that are opinion-based
	Clear language/writing style	Easily understood by educated, non-specialist
	Appearance/design	Visually engaging Presentation of information through charts, graphs, photos

Source: Jones, N. & Walsh, C. (2008). Policy briefs as a communication tool for development research.
<http://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/594.pdf>

Preparing and Delivering an Elevator Pitch

An elevator pitch is a brief, persuasive speech used to spark interest in a policy issue that one is concerned about. Elevator pitch is commonly used in the business and corporate world, but it can also be drawn upon by professionals in the public and NGO sectors to give a compelling case for a policy option. Some may know this type of speech to be called “a pitch, snapshot or one-minute message”. A good elevator pitch should last no longer than a short elevator (lift) ride of one minute, hence the name. An elevator pitch should be **interesting, memorable, and succinct**. An important point to bear in mind when developing an elevator pitch for a health policy issue of concern is to focus on three main messages:

- The problem
- Supporting evidence
- Request (either for a meeting to discuss issue in detail, or appeal to audience to act on the issue)

An elevator pitch should be relevant to the audience it is intended. For instance, one needs to think about the hook that will get the target audience interested in the issue. One should ask themselves a number of questions: Why should the audience listen? What is in it for the audience?

An elevator pitch should be:

- Concise: contains as few words as possible, but no fewer than one minute
- Credible: explains why you are qualified/best placed to see the problem and to build your solution
- Compelling: explains the problem and your solution
- Consistent: every version of an effective elevator pitch conveys the same basic message
- Conversational: instead of the intention being to close the deal, the goal of an elevator pitch is to just set the hook; to start a dialogue with the audience for your pitch

An important aspect of developing an effective elevator pitch is to practice. The textbox below provides an example of an elevator pitch. Note that an elevator pitch is delivered orally; preparing a written one is only meant to help one thrash out the key message or the hook they want to use to capture the attention of the target audience, and for practicing purposes.

Source: <https://pixabay.com/en/dialog-tip-advice-hint-speaking-148815/>

Read the Handout ‘Your Elevator Pitch Needs an Elevator Pitch’.

Developing and Using Powerpoint Presentations Effectively

Tips for developing effective Powerpoint presentations

- Keep the number of slides to a minimum
- Limit the information on the slide to a single point or idea --- no more than 5 lines
- Keep slides simple with plenty of open space
- Use “powerful” titles that communicate the point of the slide
- Use ‘power-points’ not sentences – one 1 line
- Use visuals – graphics, pictures
- Simplicity
- Large readable type
- Strong color contrast
- Use slide master to create consistent slides

Tips for delivering effective Powerpoint presentations

- Practice
- Show up early your equipment works
- Test your presentation on the actual presentation computer – don't assume it will work
- Don't read the presentation – practice so that you can deliver from the 'power-points' without reading word by word
- One slide per minute
- Stay on time
- Turn your screen saver off
- Monitor your audience's behavior
- Avoid moving the pointer unconsciously
- Ask your audience to hold questions till the end

Tips for conveying your message

- Appearance counts!
- Clarity & brevity
- Timeliness & timing
- Credibility & trustworthiness

Additional Resources and Useful Links

UKAID (2013). Research Uptake Guidance: A guide for DFID-funded research programmes. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/200088/Research_uptake_guidance.pdf

While this guidance aims to support DFID-funded research programmes, it is a useful resource for anyone seeking to improve their research uptake skills and understanding. Included in this short guide are good information about writing research and policy briefs and other communication efforts.

MEASURE Evaluation (2009). Making Research Findings Actionable: A quick reference to communicating health information for decision-making. <http://www.cpc.unc.edu/measure/resources/publications/ms-09-39>

Different stakeholders need different information, in different languages, using different terminology, delivered in formats that respect culture and norms. The goal of this document is to provide a quick reference of suggested communication approaches for health researchers and M&E professionals in order to facilitate stakeholders' use of health information for decision-making.

Lavis, J., et al. (2009). SUPPORT Tools for Evidence-Informed Health Policymaking (STP) 13: Preparing and using policy briefs to support evidence-informed policymaking. <http://www.health-policy-systems.com/content/pdf/1478-4505-7-S1-S13.pdf>

In this article, the authors suggest questions that can be used to guide those preparing and using policy briefs to support evidence-informed policy making.

French-Constant, L. (2014). How to Plan, Write and Communicate an Effective Policy Brief: Three steps to success: <http://www.researchtoaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/PBWeekLauraFCfinal.pdf>

This guide outlines how to make the most of your policy brief, by using strategic planning and targeted engagement with policy actors, to help you achieve positive policy influence. It is intended for use by researchers, knowledge brokers and communications professionals. The guide was part of the R2A launch of Policy Brief Week held in October 2014.

Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement (2016). *Is Research Working for You? A Self-Assessment Tool and Discussion Guide for Health Services Management and Policy Organization*. <http://www.cfhi-fcass.ca/publicationsandresources/resourcesandtools/SelfAssessmentTool.aspx>

Policymakers and program managers can use this tool to assess how well their organizations are finding, adapting, and using research. It will also help them identify areas for improvement. An open-access article validating the tool's use in Canadian healthcare organizations can be found here.

Warwick, C. adapted by Clevenger, J. (2011). *Help...I've Been Asked to Synthesize!*

<https://www.bgsu.edu/content/dam/BGSU/learning-commons/documents/writing/synthesis/asked-to-synthesize.pdf>

Synthesizing is a tool for drawing together particular themes or traits that you observe in various texts and reorganizing the material according to themes or traits put forth by you and driven by your thesis. This two-page article outlines three things to avoid and three things to do when synthesizing.

Research Media uses existing materials to capture the essence of a research project, transforming it into a concise, interesting and practical summary and delivering it to a global audience across a range of free-to-access media. This link is their “Photo Stream” of infographics and may be helpful in considering how simple messaging and visual representation are useful: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/researchmedia/>

This Gallery of Data Visualization displays some examples of the Best and Worst of Statistical Graphics, with the view that the contrast may be useful, inform current practice, and provide some pointers to both historical and current work. Here is the link: <http://www.datavis.ca/gallery/index.php>

The Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) offer over 200 free resources including: Writing for Conciseness and Clarity, Audience Analysis, Research, Grammar and Mechanics, Style Guides. Here is the link: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

The Writing Center at University of North Carolina offers handouts and YouTube videos on nearly 100 writing topics ranging from “making an argument” to “conciseness” and writing “scientific research reports”. Here is the link: <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/>

Illustrative Case Study

Illustrative Case Study for Evidence Use in Decision-Making

Exercise: Writing Actionable Recommendations and Elevator Pitches

In a real scenario, you would likely identify many sources of evidence that you would then appraise and prioritize. To expedite the process in a training setting, please use the following lists of key research findings as the evidence base to be synthesized. What conclusions can you draw about what the bulk of the evidence suggests, particularly in regard to actions that can be taken to effectively advance integration?

Possible Answer

Synthesis conclusions to be drawn about actionable measures which can be taken to advance effective integration include explicitly addressing and improving multiple levels of the health system, including:

- Harmonized funding
- Government leadership, policy linkages, and coordinating bodies
- Civil society and community engagement
- Supply chain and commodity security
- Training and other human resource considerations
- Facility infrastructure
- Communication and demand generation, including dual-method promotion
- Male involvement
- Information systems and M&E

What type of elevator pitch might you deliver to convey the larger context and also your evidence-informed decision-making process and subsequent recommendations for action?

Potential elevator pitch

“The integration of family planning and HIV can be a powerfully effective approach for significantly improving the health of many women and couples. Plus, a favorable global policy environment for family planning and HIV integration has emerged, the evidence base for the effective integration of services is quickly expanding, and a broad array of guidance documents and tools are available to support integrated programming. Because of this momentum and also a direct request by senior management, we have carefully assessed available and high quality evidence, drawn lessons from program experiences in the field, and identified relevant practical technical guidance and tools. As a result, I’d like you to consider our concisely packaged series of evidence-based policy recommendations for institutionalizing and scaling up integrated family planning and HIV services in Country X”.