



# Enhancing Research Capacity and Evidence Use



AERFC learning call

October 22, 2024

# Presenters



**Vianney Mbonigaba**

Senior Research and Policy Manager  
IPA Uganda



**Jemima Okal**

Associate Policy Manager  
IPA Kenya

IPA is committed to **discovering** and  
**advancing** what works to improve  
the lives of people living in poverty

# Challenges in Evidence Generation and Uptake

- ❖ Limited expertise in rigorous research methodologies like RCTs, translation of evidence to policy and the competing needs between teaching and research.
- ❖ Short-term funding results in incomplete or underfunded projects, reducing the policy impact
- ❖ Limited of co-creation leading to a disconnect between research, policy and programming.
- ❖ Research dissemination and knowledge translation is often not prioritized for funding, making research inaccessible to policymakers.
- ❖ Restricted funding focus that is biased to funders interest which may be mismatched to the current user priority/problem area and local context.



# IPA's LMIC Researcher Diversification Strategy

Launched in 2021, the Researcher Diversification Strategy is a part of IPA's broader strategy for diversity, equity, and inclusion.

By 2025, our goal is for 60 percent of IPA projects to include LMIC researchers.



**Expand development research networks** to include more researchers from low-and-middle income countries (LMIC).



**Enhance access to funding** for LMIC researchers.



**Promote pipeline development** of LMIC researchers within our country offices



Support LMIC researchers with **research communications and policy engagement.**

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## Summary of OCA findings in Kenya and Uganda



# Key lessons from the RSEL pilot project

- 1** RSEL is a novel concept with only a few researchers focusing on it thus requiring a multi-faceted approach to enhance evidence generation and uptake.
- 2** Many research agendas focus on foundational skills (literacy & numeracy), with little or no mention of RSEL. RSEL interventions are not distinct either thus need to develop a research agenda on RSEL
- 3** Opportunity to document, share and generate evidence on R-SEL and formation of COP's to drive this agenda.
- 4** R-SEL is a nascent area that has great potential for further research and mainstreaming in education programs, including the 21st century skills and implementing competency based curricula

# Research Financing

## Finding:

- Limited institutional budgets for research which negatively impacts the improvement of the institutions research infrastructure, staffing, research development and engagement at institutional level.
- Government research funding sources e.g Research and Innovation Fund (RIF) and National Research Fund are designed to be expended within a given financial year and are therefore not reliable, not flexible and not sustainable.

## Recommendation:

- Increase advocacy towards government to increase budgets to respective institutions to generate policy-relevant research.
- Fund critical research infrastructure like facilities, technology, software, and data management systems.
- Advocate for co-financing with government to showcase flexible funding mechanisms that cross the financial years. Build flexible, long-term funding mechanisms to enable impactful, high-quality research.



# Research capacity - Leadership

## Finding:

- Limited expertise in rigorous research methodologies like RCTs and production of policy relevant research
- Competing needs between teaching and research.

## Recommendation:

- Leadership participation in research and capacity strengthening to allow for better research focused decision-making.
- Strengthen human resource capacities through tailored peer-to-peer learning among southern institutions, coaching & mentoring, training, partnerships, collaborations, and networking.
- Explore course buyout models with institutions to enable researchers dedicate more time to research, including mentorship for early career researchers.



# Research capacity - Knowledge translation & Communication

## **Finding:**

- Inadequate infrastructure to support research function at the institutions including embedded capacity development, research publication, reporting and dissemination
- Lack of budget for research dissemination and publication

## **Recommendation:**

- Funding research co-creation to allow scoping and joint development of contextually relevant solutions between policymakers and researchers
- Support development of frameworks that facilitate the practical application of research evidence in policy making.
- Supporting/funding local researchers to publish in research journals and sharing their work in various consortiums





# Future Directions in Supporting Research Capacity and Evidence Use

Co-creation and adaptive/flexible financing models are important for effective and sustainable capacity strengthening and evidence use

## Invest in Local Expertise

Support training, mentorship, and workshops to develop local research talent.

## Ensure Sustainable Funding

Build flexible, long-term funding mechanisms to enable impactful, high-quality research.

## Enhance Knowledge Uptake

Prioritize support towards effective communication and dissemination efforts to bridge the gap between research and policy.